

# THE PANJAB PAST AND PRESENT

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Volume— V  
Part I-II

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*Edited by*  
GANDA SINGH



PUBLICATION BUREAU  
PUNJABI UNIVERSITY PATIALA

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Part I-II

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## The Pre-Harappan Settlements of Ancient Panjab

DEVENDRA HANDA

It was probably towards the close of the fourth millennium B.C. that settled life began on the alluvial plains of the Indus and its tributaries and "the arrival of new influences or people from the west" in Baluchistan seems to have contributed to the "proliferation of settlements and development of material culture" of the peasantry here. It is in Baluchistan that we have come across the earliest settlements of the chalcolithic period in the Indo-Pak sub continent.<sup>1</sup> Of these Kili Ghul Mohammad and Damb Sadaat in the Quetta valley<sup>2</sup> and Rana Ghundai in the Loralai valley<sup>3</sup> in northern Baluchistan, Anjira<sup>4</sup> in central and Kulli<sup>5</sup> and Mehi<sup>6</sup> in southern Baluchistan are particularly important as it is from these or allied sites that the origins and parallels of the earliest settlements of Sind, northern Rajasthan and Panjab (present Haryana State) are mainly drawn. In Sind Amri<sup>7</sup> on the right bank of the Indus and Kot Diji<sup>8</sup> about a hundred miles north-east of the former are amongst the important

1. Bridget and Raymond Allehin, *The Birth of Indian Civilization* (Penguin Book, 1963), pp. 105-6. The Urban Revolution which consummated first in Sumer is said to have reached India through the table-land of Iran and Afghanistan in the north-west (V. Gordon Childe, *New Light on the Most Ancient East*, London, 1952, pp. 238-44). The small mound of Kili Ghul Muhammad measuring nearly 100x60x12½ yards has given the earliest relics of the chalcolithic period. Radio-carbon samples from a hearth of the uppermost levels of the lowest of the four cultural phases of Period I have given dates of 3688 and 3712 B. C. [?]
2. W. A. Fairervis, *Excavations in the Quetta Valley*, New York, 1956.
3. E. J. Ross, *A Chalcolithic Site in North Baluchistan*, 'Journal of Near Eastern Studies,' vol. V (1946); W. A. Fairervis, *Archaeological Surveys in the Zhob and Loralai districts*, New York, 1959.
4. B. de Cardi, *Pakistan Archaeology*, vol. II (1965), pp. 86-182.
5. Sir Aurel Stein, *An Archaeological Tour in Gedrosia*, MASI, No. 43 (Calcutta, 1931), pp. 118-27.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 154-63.
7. J. M. Casal, *Fouilles d'Amri*, 2 vols, Paris, 1964.
8. F. A. Khan, *Preliminary Report on Kot Diji Excavations*, 1957-58, pp. 1-16;

[Contd. on page 2]

sites which have been excavated and yielded pre-Harappan relics. In Rajasthan, it is Kalibangan, on the left bank of the now dry bed of the Ghaggar river, nearly 120 miles south-east of Harappa and 300 miles east north-east of Kot Diji, which has been excavated and has revealed both Harappan and pre-Harappan occupations.<sup>9</sup> Back home in the Panjab, pre-Harappan pottery has been encountered in the pre-defence levels of Harappa;<sup>10</sup> at Bhoot, south of Khairpur in Bahawalpur;<sup>11</sup> at Jalilpur in Multan district<sup>12</sup> and at a large number of sites in Hissar, Karnal and Jind districts (of the present Haryana State).<sup>13</sup>

The Pottery found from the pre-defence levels at Harappa has been classified in three groups: (i) from the only occupation layer that preceded and immediately underlay the defences,<sup>14</sup> (ii) from the building level of the defences,<sup>15</sup> and (iii) from the mud-bricks of the

*Contd. from page 1]*

*Before Mohenjo-daro: New Light on the Beginnings of the Indus Valley Civilization from Recent Excavations at Kot Diji*, 'Illustrated London News', May 24, 1958, pp. 866-7; *The Indus Civilization and Early Iran*, Karachi, 1964, pp. 1-104; *Kot Diji, Pakistan Archaeology*, vol. II (1965), pp. 11-85; Mortimer Wheeler, *The Dawn of Civilization* (ed., Stuart Piggott), 1960, p. 248. The pre-Harappan culture of Kot Diji is also sometimes designated after the site name as Kot Dijian.

9. IAR, 1960-61, pp. 30-1; 1961-2, pp. 39-44; 1962-63, pp. 20-31; 1963-64, pp. 30-39, Pls. xvii-xxiv; 1964-65, Cyclostyled copy in the Central Archaeological Library, New Delhi, 1967-68, pp. 42-5, Pls. xiii-xxi; B. B. Lal and B. K. Thapar, *Excavations at Kalibangan*, 'Cultural Forum', vol. 34 (July, 1967), pp. 78-88. The pre-Harappan remains have been found buried under the Harappan occupational strata on the citadel mound (KLB-1) to the west of the main Harappan mound (KLB-2). The pre-Harappan phase of Kalibangan is thus known as Kalibangan I or 'Sothi' culture after the name of a site where similar pottery had been met with earlier (A. Ghosh, *East and West*, April, 1953, pp. 31-4).
10. Mortimer Wheeler, 'Harappa: 1946,' *Ancient India*, no. 3 (1947), pp. 91-7, figs. 8-10. and plates xl-xliv.
11. Allchin, op. cit., p. 119.
12. *Ibid.*
13. Suraj Bhan, *The Dawn of Civilization in Haryana*, 'Haryana studies in History and Culture' (ed. K. C. Yadav), Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, 1968, pp. 1-5 and Appendix II, pp. 135-9.
14. Of the thirty sherds found, none with the exception of a unspecialised foot-stand had any similarity with the mature Harappan wares. This pottery is finer than that of the Harappans, has generally a slip of dark purple-red with a

[*Contd. on page 3*]

'rampart,' wall and platform (a) and from the earthen make-up of the 'rampart' and the platform (b).<sup>16</sup> Not much is known of the pottery of the other sites as none of them has been excavated. The pottery from these sites, however, had similarities with the pre-Harappan wares of Harappa, Kot Diji and Kalibangan.<sup>17</sup>

*Contd. from page 2]*

- marked dull matt surface, mostly decorated with carefully drawn black horizontal bands, one sherd showing horizontal cord impression and the commonest type is a well-made globular beaker with straight or slightly everted rim usually painted black externally and sometimes with a pedestal base. It shows certain similarities with the Zhob culture wares of northern Baluchistan (Wheeler, AI, no. 3, p. 91).
15. Only five sherds were found, two of which belonged to the pottery of the preceding group (*Ibid*).
  16. Of about the 150 sherds of group iii (a), only two showed Harappan affinities, one sherd having a concentric semi-circle design is comparable with a sherd from Periano Ghundai in the Zhob valley and all the rest belong to the preceding series. The large group iii (b) is almost entirely of the *same* Harappan nature with the exception of six sherds one of which is comparable with pottery from the pre-Harappan levels at Amri in Sind (*Ibid*).
  17. The Kot Diji pottery is wheel-made, its clay well-livigated, its paste and ground varying from pinkish to red hue, with pleasing designs and interesting shapes. The important types are dish-on-stand, open mouthed globular jars with short run and flat base, straight walled and wide-mouthed cylindrical vessels, miniature pottery forms like the kanded cups, beakers and vases and the flat-based plates of thin grey fabric. The decorations consist mainly of wide bands at the neck of vessels in red brown and sepia; fish-scale pattern; loops and wavy lines in black and a complex design in black and white portraying a horned deity—one of the most rare and well-developed designs of Kot Diji pottery, unknown from any other site (Khan, *Preliminary Report on Kot Diji Excavations*, 1957-58, p.14). The Kot Diji pottery thus bears a marked similarity to the pre-defence Harappan and Amri wares (Khan, *op. cit.*; Wheeler, 1960, *op. cit.*).

The Kalibangan pottery "was wheel-made, comparatively light and thin in fabric, red-to-pinkish in colour and painted in black, combined at times with white, over a self-slipped dull surface" (IAR, 1961-62, p.42). This pottery which is a distinctive trait of the pre-Harappan culture of Kalibangan, has been classified in six fabrics which for the sake of convenience have been named as Fabrics A to F (IAR, 1962-63, pp. 20-7, figs. 2-9).

Fabric A, comparatively light and thin in section and red to pinkish in colour was although made on wheel carelessly potted as indicated by irregular striations and most of the vessels were painted generally above the girth in black, sometimes combined with white, over a dull-red surface. Fabric B inclu-

*[Contd. on page 4]*

### Chronology

Our main evidence for the determination of the chronological horizon of the pre-Harappan settlements of the region are the excavations of and Carbon-14 dates from Kot Diji and Kalibangan. The excavations at Kot Diji showed sixteen occupational layers of which the uppermost three were typical of the Harappan civilization, the fourth was 'mixed' and the remaining twelve represented the antecedent culture (called Kot Dijian after the type-site). Carbon-14 dates from layers 5 and 14 (from the top) have been determined in the neighbourhood of 2400 B.C. and 2700 B.C.<sup>18</sup> The Carbon-14 dates from the pre-Harappan levels of Kalibangan range between  $4321 \pm 118$  and  $3718 \pm 113$ .<sup>19</sup> We thus see that though 'urbanisation' was taking its seeds in Baluchistan about the mid-fourth millennium B.C.,<sup>20</sup> it reached Sind and Rajasthan some centuries later probably during the second and third quarters of the third millennium B.C. In Panjab it may have not taken long to reach Bahawalpur and Multan from Sind from where it spread to the north-east towards Harappa and to the east and south-east towards Hissar, Jind and Karnal districts of the present Haryana State, through northern Rajasthan along the Drishadvati (Ghaggar) river. The evidence from Kalibangan indicates the merging of the pre-Harappan into the Harappan suggesting their existence of about half a millennium approximately, i.e., to about 2000 B. C. or so, partly antecedent and partly contemporaneous with the Harappans.

### Habitations and Houses

Taking clues from Kot Diji and Kalibangan which are our main

*Contd. from Page 3]*

ded carefully wheel-potted vessels treated with a red slip up to the shoulder having black-painted horizontal bands of varying thickness. Fabric C was distinguished by a finer textured paste and all over, smooth-slipped surface in shades of red and plum or purple-red. Fabric D included vessels of thick sturdy section and slipped red surface whereas Fabric E comprised vessels with buff or reddish-buff slip. Fabric F consisted of the grey-coloured pottery with painted decorations in black and white. See IAR, 1962-63, pp. 20-7, figs. 2-9, for the detailed account of the different fabrics, their types and decorations.

18. Wheeler (1960), op. cit. p. 248, cf. the dates from the early pre-Harappan period  $4555 \pm 145$  and late pre-Harappan period  $4285 \pm 156$ ,  $4205 \pm 140$  and  $4040 \pm 138$  of Kot Diji as given by Allchins, op. cit., p. 336.

19. *Ibid.*

20. As indicated by Carbon-14 dates from Period I at Kili Ghul Mohammad ( $5662 \pm 515$ ;  $5638 \pm 85$ ;  $5418 \pm 83$  B.P.).

pre-Harappan excavated sites, we may say that many of the important pre-Harappan towns of Panjab also may have had citadels and defensive walls.<sup>21</sup> The gentry lived near the citadels and the outer parts were probably inhabited by the artisan classes. These were the earliest fortified towns of the Indo-Pak sub-continent.

Houses of mud-bricks (on stone foundations at Kot Diji), sometimes separated by lanes, with mud-plastered walls have been excavated. Not much is known about the house plans. Probably the houses had properly-oriented spacious rooms having easily accessible local foundation material and mud-brick superstructures, flat roofs covered with mud-plastered reedmats, etc., and mud-brick floors with pots and pans, large storage jars, etc., here and there. Though all the structures uncovered so far have been found to be of mud-bricks, the use of baked bricks is attested by the discovery at Kalibangan of a two-coursed drain below a Harappan platform.<sup>22</sup> Baked brick-bats have also been met with in the structures of this period.<sup>23</sup> All the bricks used are of a uniform size : 30x 20x 10 cm.<sup>24</sup> Unlike the ones in the Harappan habitations, wells have not been found in any house either at Kot Diji or at Kalibangan.<sup>25</sup> At the latter site, ovens of under ground and overground varieties have been met with in the kitchen of a house revealing interesting evidence regarding cooking practices.<sup>26</sup>

The streets and lanes did not run in the cardinal directions in the pre-Harappan habitations.

21. Khan, *Preliminary Report on Kot Diji Excavations*, pp. 11-12; IAR, 1961-62, p. 41; Lal and Thapar, 'Cultural Forum,' op. cit., p. The defensive wall of the citadel at Kot Diji was raised on a bed-rock with foundations of undressed stone blocks and superstructure of mud bricks and there were bastions at regular intervals. At Kalibangan only mud-bricks were made use of. So it seems that local conditions and locally available materials were utilised by the people.
22. IAR, 1967-68, p. 45, Pl. xxiA. At Harappa also fragments of baked brick structures were identified at two points below the defences (Wheeler, *The Indus Civilization*, Cambridge, 1968, p. 30).
23. IAR, 1962-63, p. 20.
24. IAR, 1961-62, p. 42; 1967-68, p. 45.
25. We are not sure of the existence of wells in the houses. The few stray wedge-shaped baked bricks found in the excavations at Kalibangan however, indicate their use for the construction of wells, probably somewhere near the habitation area. See IAR, 1962-63, p. 20.
26. *Ibid.*

### **Sociological Aspects of the life of the people**

Unfortunately, because of the limited work done so far and the absence of detailed reports of whatever has been done, not much is known about the different aspects of life of the pre-Harappan people.

Agriculture was probably the chief mainstay of the economic life of the people. The discovery of the saw-edged chert blades<sup>27</sup> and furrow-marks just adjacent to the habitation area at Kalibangan (KLB-1) is the irrefragible evidence of agriculture. What crops were sown is, however, not fully known.<sup>28</sup> Leaf-shaped chert arrowheads found from Kot Diji<sup>29</sup> and the five stone implements like short blades of agate and chalcedony, clay missiles and bronze arrowheads together with a copper or bronze celt found from Kalibangan indicate hunting to get food and probably as a pastime. Practically nothing is known of the polity and administration of these pre-Harappan towns. The massive defensive walls both at Kot Diji and Kalibangan, however, seem to have been built by well-organised communities. What precisely was the politic and administrative set up is a matter of guess only. The absence of stone terracotta figures and the cemetery or individual graves render it very difficult to guess anything about the religious beliefs of the people and the way of disposing off their dead. If the absence of any graves is taken as an evidence we may say it with certain reservations that the pre-Harappan people probably cremated their dead away from their houses and habitations.

The womenfolk decorated themselves with beads and bangles of shell, terracotta, etc., and their children played with toys like the stone and terracotta balls and marbles, miniature clay pots and cowrie shells, terracotta bulls and toy cart wheels.<sup>30</sup> The different types and decorations of pottery, beads and bangles of different types and materials, children's play things and the copper or bronze celt (if it is not an import) acquaint us of the arts and crafts then prevalent.

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27. IAR, 1961-62, p. 43.

28. From the evidence of cord-impressions on the pre-Harappan pottery we may conclude that cotton was grown and people were acquainted with the art of spinning and probably weaving also.

29. Wheeler (1960), p. 248.

30. IAR, 1961-2, p. 43, B.K. Thapar in *Indian Prehistory*, 1964 : (Poona, 1965), p. 137.

### Cultural Affiliation

A comparison of the pottery types and designs of the pre-Harappan occupations of Harappa, Kot Diji and Kalibangan shows quite a few analogues besides certain minor differences. Similarities of the pre-Harappan pottery have also been traced with the Kili Ghul Mohammed Black-on-Red slip ware, Kechi-Beg Black-on-Buff ware; Quetta ware, Jangal Coarse and Painted wares, Mahi-Nundara pottery, Amri ware, etc.<sup>31</sup> Some of the analogies may have been incidental while others may be the result of cultural cross-currents and influences or a common source. The stratigraphical position of this pre-Harappan pottery is, however, quite clear. Both at Kot Diji and Kalibangan, it seems to be partially antecedent and partially overlapping with the Harappan pottery.<sup>32</sup> Though a burnt layer between the Harappan and pre-Harappan strata at Kot Diji represents the destruction of the earlier settlement by the Harappans, yet a mixed layer indicates the coevity of the two.<sup>33</sup> The evidence from Kalibangan however, shows peaceful co-living probably in the same houses as the two ceramic industries have been found mixed up in most of the houses.<sup>34</sup> The pre-Harappan culture, therefore, cannot "claim to have been in any direct sense parental to that of the Indus cities."<sup>35</sup> On the other hand the citadel and the defensive wall; a few pottery types and decorative motifs : fish scale and *pipal* leaf patterns pottery with external ribbing, external cord impression ring-stand, dish-on-stand, etc.; the use of fine stone implements clay missiles (terracotta cakes); mud and baked bricks; beads and bangles of shell and terracotta; stone and baked clay balls and marbles, terracotta figurines and carts, etc., suggest some common inspiration and influence probably from the north west where the rudiments of both have been met with.<sup>36</sup>

### The end of the pre-Harappan Culture

As indicated above, the burnt layer between the pre-Harappan

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31. A Ghosh, *Ibid.*, p. 115. More analogies will probably come to light as a result of patient and persistent research work.
  32. Khan, *Preliminary Report on Kot Diji Excavations*, pp. I-16; Wheeler (1960), p. 298.
  33. Wheeler (1960), *op. cit.*
  34. A Ghosh in *Indian Prehistory*, *op. cit.*, p. 114.
  35. Wheeler (1960), *op. cit.*
  36. A Ghosh in *Indian Prehistory*, *op. cit.*, p. 116.



and Harappan deposits at Kot Diji represents the destruction of the former settlement by the Harappans,<sup>37</sup> the evidence from Kalibangan is that of peaceful co-existence of the two and a slow and subsequent merger of the former into the latter.<sup>38</sup> Further work is necessary to make any remark with certainty but the present evidence probably represents an inroad of the Harappan from the north and north-west resulting in the destruction and pushing away of the unyielding inhabitants and their towns, subjugation and peaceful co-existence with those who yielded and possibly fleeing of some of the unyielding and unable-to-fight people towards the east north-east and south-east

- 
37. Strangely enough no skeletons have been met with in the burnt layer.
38. The Kalibangan pre-Harappans had to face occasional floods as indicated by the deposits of sand and clay over their remains (A Ghosh in *Indian Pre-history*, p. 114) but they seem to have resisted these floods, yielded to the Harappan inroad and lived peacefully with them to finally lose their identity slowly. There is evidence of an earthquake also but the settlement was reoccupied soon. IAR, 1962-63, p. 27 pl. XLIXA; 1963-64, p. 30, pl. XVIII A. Lal and Thapar (1967), op. cit.

## The Rise and Fall of General Perron

BRIGADIER H. BULLOCK, F. R. HIST. S.

### THE EDITOR'S NOTE

It was during the fourteenth session of the Indian Historical Records Commission held at Lahore on December 13-15, 1937, that the late Brigadier (then Major) H. Bullock informed me of his interest in European military adventurers in Scindia's and Begum Samru's services in northern India. He had been then studying the subject for the last six years and had written a number of articles on these adventurers in the *Statesman* in 1930-33 under the *nom-de-plume* of 'Hyderabad.' In 1934 he had finished the first draft of a book on the subject, but he had then to drop the 'adventurers' and turn to other work. In the summer of 1937, he split his draft into two parts, one being the present sketch of General Perron's career in Hindustan, with particular reference to his actions in 1803, based principally on the French sources. These, according to him, 'had never been used in English,' and they gave quite a different interpretation of events at Delhi and Agra in 1803 to any accepted English version. His conclusion was that avarice was the dominating factor with Perron and Bourquin, who quarreled bitterly in 1803. Indeed the quarrel persisted and Bourquin turned up years later at Perron's house in France and tried to blackmail him.

As Pandit Daya Ram, whose Persian manuscript, the *Shir-o-Shakar*, I had placed in the exhibition of historical works during the above session of Records Commission, was Bourquin's *Munshi*, Major Bullock felt interested in the manuscript thinking that it might throw some useful light on the events connected with the activities of these adventurers. I translated the relevant portion of the *Shir-o-Shakar* and sent it to him on the 10th of May, 1938.

As I was also interested in the study of the Maratha-Sikh relations during the last quarter of the eighteenth century when General D'Boign, General Perron, Colonel Louis Bourquin of Mahadji Sindhia's service, Begum Samru of Sardhana and George Thomas of Hansi had been very active on the Sikh frontiers, Major Bullock sent to me the typescript of his *General Perron* on January 27, 1938. I

proposed to publish it in the *Journal of Sikh History* which was to be issued by the Khalsa College, Amritsar. But as the plan of this journal was dropped, the type-script went into the cold storage where it has been lying all these years. I am glad to have been able to resurrect it for publication in the *Panjab Past and Present*.

The French rendering of my translation of the *Shir-o-Shakar*, done by Monsieur Edmond Gaudart, retired Governor of French dominions in India, Pondicherry, was published by the Societie de L'Histoire de L'Inde Francaise, Pondichery and Paris, in 1940.

Brigadier Bullock could not write much on the European adventurers in Punjab in the service of Maharaja Ranjt Singh beyond *General Ventura* which was published in the first volume of the *Indian Archives* (National Archives of India), New Delhi, for January 1947, pp. 18-25. He had with him a number of stray notes on various military adventurers and other European and Eurasians in the Punjab but for reasons beyond his control he could not reduce them into shape. His articles on the Commanders-in-Chief of India and some other papers appeared in the *USI Journal*, Simla, in the forties and fifties.

March 24, 1971

Ganda Singh

## THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE

Pierre Francois Cuillier, *dit* Perron, son of a weaver, became General and Commander-in-Chief of the Maratha armies at the height of their achievement; fell from power before Wellesley's diplomacy and Lake's strategy; returned to France with a substantial remnant of his fortune; and lived for many years as a country gentleman, marrying his daughters into the French nobility.

There is no life of him in English, and no extended account of his career has appeared in any English book since 1892. In no history of the Second Maratha War have there been utilised the little-known autobiographical notes left by French officers in the Maratha service, with the result that much interesting information regarding the manner in which Delhi and Agra fell into the hands of the British has not been collated. By drawing on documents—chiefly French—which have come to light in recent years, and which were still undiscovered or not used at the time when the *Cambridge History of India* and other modern works were compiled, I have endeavoured to give an outline of a period of modern Indian history which was previously partly obscure. This period saw the breaking of the Maratha power in Hindustan, the extinction of French dreams of an eastern dominion, and the passing of the Mogul Emperor and the historic fortresses of Delhi and Agra into the hands of the British.

I must acknowledge valuable assistance and encouragement received from Monsieur A. Lehuraux of Chandernagore, who has been kind enough to read my manuscript critically and suggest many improvements; Sir Evan Cotton, C. I. E.; Mr J.C. Keyte; and Major V.C.P. Hodson. The first draft of the first two sections appeared in the *Statesman* of Calcutta some years ago, and I am grateful to the Editor for permission to make use of it.

Hdqrs. Northern Command,  
Murree, Punjab

H. Bullock

## PIERRE FRANCOIS CUILLIER, GENERAL PERRON

### I. Apprenticeship as Adventurer, 1753-1789

Pierre Francois Cuillier—to give him his baptismal name—was born at Luceau, near Chateau-de-Loir, Sarthe, on 6th August 1753, the son of a master weaver of that place, Marin Cuillier, and his wife, Marie-Anne Lefevre. Cuillier *pere*, according to family tradition, had himself visited the East Indies between 1740 and 1750. Shipwrecked on the homeward voyage, from the riches he had “shaken from the pagoda tree” he saved only a handful of diamonds, emeralds, pearls and sapphires, which at the moment of the disaster he was carrying about him in a belt; and we are told that it was from hearing the story of these precious stones that the youthful Pierre resolved to seek his fortune in the East.

At the age of eighteen Pierre Cuillier ran away from home, making for Nantes by way of Angers, and proposing to support himself by the sale of a stock of handkerchiefs in which he had invested his small savings. At Indret he obtained employment in a cannon-foundry, and stayed there for two years, winning the reputation of a clever workman, acquiring technical knowledge which was to stand him in good stead later, and receiving from his comrades the nickname of Perron—a diminutive of Pierre. He retained this nickname as his *nom-de-guerre*, and in later life used it to the virtual exclusion of his patronymic Cuillier. As General Perron he was to be known by all, and feared and hated by many, throughout the marches of Hindustan.

The next six or seven years of his life are obscure. He is said to have left France as a private soldier, about 1774, with a draft for a corps which was garrisoning the Ile de France; and if this was so he had perhaps obtained his discharge from the army before 1780, in which year we find definite mention of him as a member of the crew of the frigate *la Sardaigne* bound for Pondicherry, in Admiral Suffren's fleet. Within a few month of this he was in Northern India, a military adventurer, with his foot already on the ladder which he was to scale to the topmost rung during the next generation.

By 1781 he was serving in the mercenary corps in the pay of the Rana of Gohad in Central India, commanded by a Scots watchmaker, George Sangster, who doubtless attained this position by reason of his mechanical knowledge, and who was subsequently to become chief ordnance officer to the great Maratha armies. We may guess that he engaged Perron to act as an artilleryman, or as a foreman, in one of the foundries which he had even then set up. This employment of Perron's did not last long, for after a couple of years or so the Rana of Gohad suffered defeat at Scindia's hands and his free-lance corps was disbanded. Perron, who had married at Delhi on 16th December, 1782, Madeleine Derridon, a French Eurasian whose brother was an officer in Scindia's service, himself joined Scindia either now or a year or two later; it was a common course for a military adventurer to leave a vanquished employer for the service of the victor. It is not impossible that, after the fall of the Rana of Gohad and before Perron joined Scindia, he served for a short space in the army of the Begam Sombre. During her long life that princess employed hundreds of European and Eurasian soldiers of fortune, though the more enterprising and competent never stayed long in her service.

It was at Dig, a fortress in the present Bharatpur State, in 1787, that Perron entered the Maratha service; and he was taken into one of the three battalions commanded by a fellow-countryman, Lestineau or Lostonneau, who was high in the Maharaja Scindia's favour. By a curious coincidence, only three days later, Lestineau's corps received another recruit, Louis Bourquin, who was also to rise to high rank in the Maratha armies and whose fortunes were to be closely intermingled with Perron's for thirty years to come.

With Lestineau, Perron, as a quartermaster-sergeant with pay at sixty rupees a month, took part in various campaigns against the Rajputs, the Rohillas and others, being present at the battles of Chaksana and Agra and at the occupation of Delhi by the Marathas in 1789. On the last-mentioned occasion Lestineau's corps was detached to assist in the pursuit of the infamous Ghulam Kadir to Meerut; and Compton tells us that "when Ghulam Kadir was captured, his saddlebags, stuffed with the jewels which the miscreant had looted from the Emperor's palace, fell into Lestineau's hands, who, with these and the pay of his battalion, absconded shortly after his return to the capital. He reached British territory in safety, and eventually

found his way to Europe with his ill-gotten wealth." If this is the true version, it is certain that Ghulam Kadir—the ruffian who had deliberately blinded the Mogul Emperor—deserves no sympathy in his loss; but it is interesting to compare the account of the same incidents given by Bourquin, the former comrade-in-arms of Lestineau and Perron, who had returned to Hindustan not long before and was now an officer in the service of the Begam Sombre. "M. Lestineau, during the lifetime of Ismail Beg [Ghulam Kadir's ally] and while he was besieging Agra," says Bourquin, "had been compelled to enter his service in spite of his attachment to Madhoji Scindia. He had been unable to relieve the town with his small force and had no other means of saving his family, which was shut up in Agra, than by accepting the terms of the conqueror; but dreading the wrath of Madhoji Scindia on his return, he made over his force to M. Perron and betook himself to Bengal."

Perron himself has not left any account of these events; and his biographer, M. Alfred Martineau, in the little which he has to say of this early part of Perron's life as an adventurer, falls into several errors. He makes Perron enter the Gohad service in 1781, but leave it almost immediately; then enter Lestineau's corps, which is said to be in the Bharatpur raja's service (an error into which Compton also fell). M. Martineau goes on to describe how that corps mutinies and its commander escapes with its funds—which, however, beyond all doubt, did not happen till 1789 whereupon, he says, Perron, after rejecting the offer of a battalion command in Scindia's service enters the army of the Begam Sombre. After a short time in her employ M. Martineau describes how deBoigne takes Perron into Scindia's employ in 1785: "Benoit de Boigne, generalissime de Scindia et reformateur de ses troupes, l'engagea comme capitaine en second... nous sommes en 1785," he writes. It is hardly necessary to point out that in 1785 de Boigne was not Scindia's commander-in-chief, nor had he yet begun to reform the Maratha army.<sup>1</sup>

Despite Bourquin's statement that Lestineau on departing for Bengal made over charge of his corps to Perron, the latter never accepted this unwelcome legacy; and the command reverted for a short time to one Pillet, another French adventurer, who had formerly

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1. A sketch of de Boigne's career is given in appendix 1.

served under the celebrated Rene Medec; but he was quite unable to keep his men in a state of discipline. Enraged at their pay having been purloined by Lestineau, and doubtless, also, at being denied a share of the loot from the saddlebags, they broke into open mutiny. The revolt was quelled by Mogul horsemen, and the corps was disbanded.

Perron once more found himself out of employment. Compton tells us that he applied for service to Rana Khan, one of Scindia's leading generals, and from him received the command of a battalion, which was, however, soon broken up. Then Perron, on the recommendation of Colonel de Montigny, an agent of the French Government in India, sought employment with the Begam Sombre; but in this he was unsuccessful. But he had not long to wait, for this was the beginning of 1790, the *annus mirabilis* of Maratha arms. Madhoji Scindia had just recalled to his standard General de Boigne, who was now busily engaged in raising the First Brigade of regulars, trained and led by European officers. For nucleus of the New Model the great Savoyard took such units as existed of the old mercenary troops in Scindia's service: Michael Filoses, Lyeute's and John Hessing's *campoos*: and Lestineau's sepoys, their outbreak now repented and forgotten, were permitted to re-enlist. These latter, it would seem, formed the Burhanpur Battalion, of which Perron received the command. De Boigne knew him as a brave soldier and as possessing technical knowledge of artillery, and gave him the rank of captain-lieutenant. By the early summer of 1790 the New Model army was ready to take the field.

## 2. Perron's Rise to Power

The next six years of Perron's life were spent as an officer in the regular brigades of Scindia's army, and saw his steady rise from captain commanding a battalion to colonel and brigadier. Fortune smiled on him throughout, but he owed his rapid advance to his own merits as a brave leader and an able organiser, and above all to his political aptitude. Perron was never the man to neglect his own interests, of which he was an efficient guardian; and right up to the debacle of 1803—if not indeed then also—he was able to ensure that those interests prevailed.

The political scene in Hindustan towards the middle part of the year 1790 may be sketched in a very few words. The chief actors



were on the one part the Rajput princes of Jodhpur and Jaipur with Scindia's old enemy Ismail Beg; and on the other part Madhoji Scindia, protector of the puppet Emperor at Delhi. Ismail Beg since Ghulam Kadir's downfall had pretended allegiance to Scindia; but now threw in his lot with the two rajas and was up in arms near Ajmer. The first task set to the new Brigade was to march from Muttra and to subdue the three revolting leaders.

The first conflict took place at Patan in the Shekhawati country on 20th June, 1790. The chief of Jaipur, whose territory marched with the Maratha dominions, would have been the first to cross swords with de Boigne had he not prudently come to terms. This left the Marathas to contend with Ismail Beg and his huge masses of Mogul horse; the Jodhpur prince with twelve thousand Rathor cavalry; four thousand Rohillas and as many Minas; and many thousands more of horse and foot, regular and irregular. Against the flower of a great military nation and their Muslim allies, perhaps fifty thousand fighting men in all, stood the first Brigade, ten thousand strong, with a backing of Maratha cavalry.

The story of that famous day has often been told, and one must resist the temptation to tell it fully once again. It is recorded that Perron particularly distinguished himself, though no details of his actions have survived. For the rest some figures must suffice to prove the triumph of the first fight of the First Brigade. In three hours of a summer's afternoon, and with a loss of 129 killed and 472 wounded, it routed the enemy's cavalry and drove their infantry to take shelter for the night in the fortified town of Patan, with a loss of 107 guns, 6,000 small arms, 252 colours, 200 camels, 513 horses, and over 3,000 cattle. Some two thousand of the Mogul and Rajput cavalry lost their lives. Next morning the garrison of Patan surrendered. Twelve thousand more became prisoners of war, and two thousand more horses were taken. As soon as the issue of the fight was no longer in doubt, Ismail Beg had galloped from the field.

On receiving news of this great victory, Scindia resolved to subdue the Rajput states once and for all. Accordingly, after leaving a holding force to keep the garrison of Ajmer immobile, de Boigne pushed boldly into Jodhpur territory. The raja, eager to wipe out the stigma of his defeat at Patan, summoned every able-bodied Rathor male between the ages of sixteen and sixty to his standard. Thus he

gathered round him thirty thousand warriors, and de Boigne came upon them at Merta on 12th September 1790. The fight lasted from dawn to midday till the last fifteen Rathors out of the thirty thousand, who had stood to arms that morning, fell in the final charge. The First Brigade and the Maratha cavalry had six or seven hundred casualties. Besides the Dangolai tank at Merta may be seen to this day the tomb, surmounted by a grim *memento mori* of skull and cross-bones, of Captain Francois de la Roy, *dit* Bahour, who commanded the right wing on that famous day and died of his wounds: the first of many gallant officers who were to fall in the campaigns of the regular Brigades.

Once again Ismail Beg made his escape. But in December 1790 he and the Jodhpur raja came to terms with the Marathas, who received three-quarters of a million sterling and the province of Ajmer. De Boigne and the Brigade reached their base at Muttra on New Year's Day, 1791, to be received with great acclaim by Scindia and his following. They left Perron behind them in charge of the newly ceded territory of Ajmer, and here he remained for more than a year, administering the district, so Compton tells us, with considerable ability. The city itself, then as now, was important both for its sanctity and for its position on great trade routes between Hindustan, the Punjab, Rajputana and Malwa.

In January 1792, Perron was called from Ajmer to deal once more with his old adversary Ismail Beg, who had joined forces with the widow of a famous Mogul general in raising the banner of revolt over the stronghold of Kanaund, near Rewari (not, as de Boigne's and Perron's French biographers curiously state, Kanauj on the Ganges, some hundreds of miles away). With four battalions Perron was sent against this fortress, which was defended by more than twenty thousand troops; and within two hours he had driven the enemy into Kanaund, leaving over two thousand of their dead upon the field. This was the first engagement in which Perron had held the chief command. A four-months' siege followed before the fort surrendered.

During this siege Perron lost his right hand, amputated at the wrist owing to its having been shattered by the explosion of a grenade which he was testing. From this disablement he received the nicknames of *Ekdast* or 'one-handed', and *Tundi Shah*, the 'King with a Stump'. For his services at Kanaund he was promoted major, and

received command of the newly raised Second Brigade, with pay at twelve hundred rupees a month and perquisites and allowances worth a very much larger sum. He was now the third officer in the Brigades, his only superiors being de Boigne and the commander of the First Brigade, Fremont.

In this year, 1792, the supremacy of Scindia in the Maratha acquisitions in Hindustan was challenged by Tukoji Rao Holkar, who marched northward with thirty thousand cavalry, a large park of artillery, and four regular battalions commanded by the Chevalier Charles Dudrenec. At first Holkar seemed unwilling to join battle, and there was much marching and countermarching; finally he seized and held the pass of Lakheri or Mokandra, some thirty five miles north-east of Kotah in Rajputana, lying on the road from Ajmer to Gwalior, and not far from the Chambal river. (It was this same pass that Colonel Monson negotiated during his disastrous retreat some twenty years afterwards.)

From this point of vantage Scindia resolved to drive his adversary, and de Boigne began the attack with three regular battalions and five hundred Rohillas, the narrowness of the pass not permitting the employment of a greater number of troops. As an old account states : "the conflict was very bloody, and the most obstinate ever witnessed by de Boigne. Early in the day an unlucky accident had nearly turned the chances against him, for a shot having struck and caused the blowing-up of an open tumbril of ammunition, it was followed by the explosion of twelve more, while the enemy took advantage of the confusion to charge. But the unfailing readiness and presence of mind of de Boigne, and the perfect discipline of his troops, averted the consequences of this mishap. The enemy were checked by a murderous fire, and as they retreated were charged by his own chosen cavalry, and the rout became general. Dudrenec's battalions were all but annihilated; their guns, thirty-eight in number, all taken, and almost all their European officers were killed." The broken remains of Holkar's army were driven across the Chambal fords and pursued for thirty miles.

Many years later, when both had retired to Europe, Perron wrote a letter to de Boigne in which he called up some memories of this battle. This fragment, nearly all we have from Perron's own hand, reads thus : "Do you remember the day we gave battle to Tukoji Holkar at the pass of Mokandra? You and I had to reconnoitre the

enemy : I climbed a tree that I might see better, and at that very moment five or six discharges of grapeshot came our way, cutting away some of the branches of the tree I was in, and killing or maiming four or five orderlies whom you had by your side. One of them, after having his leg carried away, leapt up on one foot, drew his sword, and cut his throat. And those thousands of robbers on the hill were shooting away at us without our being able to touch them, and only waiting for the moment of our defeat to fall upon us. It must be confessed that Fortune was on our side that day; the enemy forces were completely destroyed and the carnage was frightful. For the space of six leagues the road was covered with corpses. Poor Dudrenec was lucky to have a good horse: there were plenty of Europeans who were not so fortunate and who perished that day."

For the remainder of 1792 and the early part of 1793 Perron was engaged, in co-operation with other Maratha generals, in subduing the province of Malwa; and this accomplished, he and his Brigade returned to Muttra. At the end of 1793 or beginning of 1794 he was transferred to the command of the First Brigade, which was ordered South for duty at Poona, the capital city of the Peshwa, to whom Scindia nominally owed allegiance. Whilst Perron was on his march Madhoji Rao Scindia died at Poona (12 February 1794) On hearing of this Perron retraced his steps to Ujjain, where he halted and awaited the turn of events, for Madhoji had left no son and there might be trouble over the succession. The throne went to his nephew, Daulat Rao Scindia, a boy of fifteen; and we are told that when Perron and the First Brigade arrived at Poona in March they were instrumental in averting any opposition to the new ruler.

The First Brigade was still in the Deccan in January 1795 when strained relations between the Marathas and the Nizam of Hyderabad came to a head over the question of tribute. Under Perron the Brigade took the field as allies of the Peshwa, who was also assisted by Filose's and Hessing's brigades in Scindia's service, Dudrenec's brigade in Holkar's service, and huge contingents of Maratha irregulars. Opposed to them was the Nizam's army with the regular brigades of Raymond, a Frenchman, John P. Boyd, an American, and Michael Finglass, an Irish ex-dragoon. The allies, 140,000 strong, met the Nizam's 110,000 men at Kharda in the present Ahmadnagar district on 11th March 1795.

The battle, which is usually known as Kurdla or Prinda, ended

in a decisive victory for the Marathas, who drove their enemy from the field to take refuge in and about Kharda fort. Much of the credit both for the battle and the subsequent pursuit was Perron's. After sustaining a short siege the enemy came to terms: the Nizam had to pay three millions sterling, cede territory, and hand over his chief minister as a hostage.

Though the fighting at Kharda was singularly bloodless, its outcome provided so clear a proof of Perron's abilities that his military reputation was now established beyond all dispute. His supremacy assumed the highest importance when it became known that General de Boigne was about to relinquish the chief command of Scindia's armies. His motives, so far as they can now be ascertained, were various. To serve the new Maharaja, Daulat Rao, was a very different matter to serving old Madhoji. His court was thick with intrigue of every description, and de Boigne did not see eye to eye with some of the youthful prince's ministers. De Boigne had amassed a very considerable fortune and was in a position to establish himself in his native country as a man of wealth, rank and distinction. And the deciding factor was that, though still under forty-five years of age, he was feeling the strain of prolonged and continuous service and of the Indian climate to which he had been subjected for the past eighteen years.

By October 1795 de Boigne's intention to retire was generally known. Perron was at Poona, where Bourquin tells us that he took full advantage of the opportunities which he had of daily access to the sixteen-year-old prince, and succeeded in winning his favour and rapid promotion to the ranks of Lieutenant-colonel and colonel. On Christmas Day de Boigne set out from Muttra for Calcutta, never to return to Scindia's dominions. Despite Indian custom, he had nominated no successor. His post vacant, as soon as he had gone a fierce intrigue broke out between Perron and Colonel Robert Sutherland, a cashiered ex-officer of Highlanders who had just received command of the Second Brigade, vacant on the death of Major Fremont (who might otherwise have become a third candidate for de Boigne's post). Sutherland, who was connected by marriage with Perron—he had married John Hessing's daughter, Madame Perron's niece—considered that his position as chief officer of the Maratha troops in Hindustan gave him a claim to succeed de Boigne; but in the event the post went to Perron, who at court was in a

better position to prefer his claim, which it would indeed have been hard to reject in view of his recent successes. In September 1796 Daulat Rao made up his mind, and Perron received orders to go to Hindustan "with the title of Commandant of the Provinces and General of the Brigades"—in effect, Viceroy of Northern India. Handing over the First Brigade to Major Louis Dugeon, he left Poona for Muttra, arriving there on the 1st February 1797. It was just sixteen years since he had come to India as a common sailor.

### 3. Commander-in-Chief

"After Perron became commander-in-chief in 1797, with more power than any European ever possessed in Hindustan, he arranged and pursued a systematic plan to aggrandise his authority and his riches: he was successful in both, from Lahore to Kotah and from Koil to Jodhpur the country obeyed his will and dreaded his frown; and if money can bestow happiness or respect he ought to be venerated and blest, for he possessed above fifty lakhs of rupees." So wrote Major Lewis Ferdinand Smith, who knew Perron intimately and served for many years in the Brigades. And another English officer of the Maratha service, Captain William Long, thus describes his visit to Aligarh (Koil) at the height of Perron's fame. "I now found Monsieur living in all the state of viceroyalty, the Rajas and great men of the Empire bowing down before him to the very earth. A great contrast was observable between him and Lord Lake, who rose from his seat to receive a great man or a little one. ... Monsieur Perron was a man of few words and did not admire great talkers: he said little, but what he said was much to the purpose. He was fond of amusements—dancing, singing, nautches; and to these kind of people he was said to be very generous, bordering on extravagancy and Asiatic pomp and show; but he appeared destitute of moral feeling and even humanity in some of his transactions. He had well feathered his nest, as the saying is, to the tune of about a million sterling, which he had accumulated in a very few years since the battle in which the Nizam was defeated."

Let us quote finally the words of another of Perron's officers, Louis Bourquin. "At this period, Perron had the most splendid opportunity a man ever had of handing down his name to posterity by rendering his country the most signal service, at the time when the sublime project of restoring Egypt and the neighbouring countries to civilisation was in process of execution. These famous countries beheld the

flower of the French army commanded by the first of its generals. The fame of its great adventure soon reached India, where the English went so far as to intercept the correspondence between Bonaparte, the Commander-in-chief, and Tippu Sahib. Several Frenchmen discussed this expedition with Perron and the feasibility of giving it some support. One of them, a man named Fortier, full of ability and inspired with a noble enthusiasm, made an offer to Perron to convey his proposals to General Bonaparte. All he asked for was an escort of four companies. It is almost certain that at the name of Perron the way through Persia would have been opened to him. Persia, with a small part of the territory of the Afghans, was the only country which he would have had to cross to reach Syria, as the country of the Sikhs, which extends almost to the frontiers of Persia, was tributary to Perron.

"The Sikhs, whose country is extremely fertile and rich, would have provided men and all that was necessary to enable him to cross Persia; and General Bonaparte, following the footsteps of Alexander, would have entered India not as a devastating conqueror like the Persian hero but as a liberator. He would have expelled the English for ever from India so that not one of them would have remained, and by depriving them of the inexhaustible wealth of this vast country would have restored independence, peace and happiness to Asia, to Europe, to the whole world.

"These projects were no idle dreams. Perron could collect in twenty days more than 300,000 men. All the princes in India were longing for French intervention. That formidable enemy of the English, Tippu Sahib, was still alive. Persia, the only country which Perron had to cross, was divided into several factions which would have hastened to seek his alliance or rather his protection. Sindhia, in whose service Perron was, would have been in any case favourable to the French."

Though we may discount Bourquin's vision of the French holding the East in fee—a vision which had danced before the eyes of many a soldier of his race—these passages prove, I think, that Perron may, with some justice, be said to have had, for several years, "more power than any other European ever possessed in Hindustan." The problem is : what was in his heart during this period ? What was his real objective ? Power ? Wealth ? For himself alone ? Or for

whom? Was he a loyal servant of his employer Scindia or was he really serving for France? Did he betray one or both of these powers to the English? Was he a coward, or a brave man lacking in political and strategical skill? Or was his only object to amass personal wealth and take it to Europe?

Before we attempt to answer these questions, which are of much importance in considering his conduct in 1803, let us briefly consider the facts of the case. Perron was commander-in-chief to the new Maharaja Scindia, Daulat Rao, a man of much less ability than his predecessor Mahadji Rao. Over both these men was, nominally, the Mogul emperor, the blind Shah Alam, *roi faineant*. It must not be assumed that Perron as military chief was *ipso facto* the most important man in Hindustan. Quite apart from the principle that no one Maratha functionary was willingly permitted to exercise too much power, Mahadji himself was not the only rival for dominion in Hindustan. All around Delhi lay the territories of other rulers—Rohilla, Rajput, George Thomas, the Begam Sombre—who were lying in wait, like a pack of wolves, round the ruins of the dying Empire, now swooping in to snatch a district here or there, now quarrelling together over the spoil. And there were other men in Scindia's service who held great power, and would jealously resent any encroachment thereon by an European intruder.

All these factors seemingly combined to keep Perron in his place, to restrain him from any attempt to arrogate himself from his position as a purely military officer to a power in the land. But there were just a few countervailing circumstances which made his ambition not quite hopeless.

In the first place, under the prevailing system in Hindustan, a commander-in-chief always had non-military interests and functions. For at the time he was given command he also had given to him an extensive *jagir*, that is to say, an assignment of the land-revenue of a certain number of villages or of a district. When in 1792 de Boigne had protested to Mahadji Scindia that his army's pay was seven months in arrear and efficiency could no longer be maintained—*point d'argent point de suisse*, in fact—the Maratha chief had replied, "confiding to your exclusive care a province of my estate having a revenue equal to the total amount of the annual pay and expenses of the army. You will have the sole control of the territory: you yourself will choose the governors and the collectors, who will be your men ... you will



regularly pay the troops each month without being henceforth obliged to have recourse to my ministers."<sup>1</sup>

This precedent, which made the commander-in-chief a territorial potentate, was followed in the case of Perron, to whom was assigned a *jagir*, bringing in about twenty lakhs of rupees yearly, of lands to the east and south of Delhi. He thus received the sole charge of a large tract of territory,<sup>2</sup> and any surplus revenue remaining after payment of the Brigades went into his own pocket.

Perron's chief rival in Scindia's service in Northern India at the time of his elevation to the chief command was Lakwa Dada, who was little short of brilliant as a general and as a statesman. This obstacle was soon removed: in August 1798 he was disgraced and deprived of all his offices and honours, and he died of wounds received in action against Perron early in 1800. The existing disunion amongst the Marathas, which in 1799 had reached a height amounting to absolute anarchy, was to a large extent favourable to Perron, who held in his hands the military striking force and the source from which its maintenance was drawn.

At his headquarters at Koil he was neither too near to nor too far from Scindia, whose Court, though mobile, was often located at Ujjain, a town conveniently situated on the road from Hindustan to the Deccan. At Koil Perron resided in the fine house constructed by de Boigne, and close by was a strong fortress and cantonment garrisoned by regulars; whilst here Perron was far better situated than Scindia to cope with affairs at Delhi and in the Sikh and Rohilla territories. He was far enough from Ujjain to be able with impunity to turn a deaf ear, when it suited him, to requests from Scindia for troops to be sent to the Deccan; and when he judged that the anti-Perron cabal at Court was gaining too much ground, he was yet near enough to proceed to Ujjain in viceregal state and to solace his master with an offering of five lakhs of rupees, wrung from the helpless inhabitants of his *jagir*.

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1. *Military System of the Marathas*, by Dr. S.N. Sen, pp. 137-8.

2. "He governed immense territories, the twenty-seven districts formerly assigned to de Boigne, to which he had personally annexed twelve new areas situated to the west of the Jamna. Twelve large estates around Delhi paid him a redeance. The whole brought in four million rupees yearly"—*Martineau*, pp. 88-9.

It is not clear whether Perron was ever formally appointed Viceroy (or as the imperial edict would have styled it—*Subahdar*) of Hindustan. In 1799 he had received a formal warrant, which still exists and is illustrated in M. Martineau's book, appointing him to the rank of *Haft-hazari*—literally "commander of seven thousand"—which was a very high rank in the Mogul system of nobility. He was, however, *de facto* viceroy from about March 1802 till Ambaji Inglia, the Maratha chief, was appointed *Subahdar* on the outbreak of war with the British in August 1803; and indeed from the very time of his assuming office in 1797 he exercised little less power in Hindustan than could have any formally appointed viceroy.

I do not propose to narrate formally the events of Perron's regime as commander-in-chief from 1797 to 1803. There was considerable military activity throughout: in 1797 the first war of the Bais; in 1798 the battle of Jaipur and the securing of Delhi and instalment of a French guardian, Dugeon, over the Emperor; in 1799 the instalment of his relative, George Hessian, in the fortress of Agra; in 1800 the defeat and death of Lakwa Dada; in 1801 the important campaign (dealt with fully by Compton and Messrs. Grey & Garrett) against George Thomas, and the defeat of Scindia's rival Holkar; in 1802. Thomas's surrender on New Year's Day was immediately followed by the raising of a Fourth Brigade. It will be sufficient to note that Perron was growing more and more impatient of the interference (as he treated it) of his master Scindia and his advisers, which culminated in direct disobedience followed by a stormy interview at Ujjain from which Perron emerged outwardly triumphant.

The military history of this period has been traversed by many writers, and I prefer to devote my space rather to the highly controversial questions arising out of Perron's conduct in 1803.

#### 4. War with the British, 1803

The following consideration of Perron's conduct in 1803 is based on two sources, each of which is a first-hand statement by a military adventurer who took a leading part in the events of which he speaks. It is a rare, if not an unique circumstance, for material of such a primary nature to be available for those who treat of the soldiers of fortune; and in the present instance we are thus fortunate indeed. They have been quoted from more extensively than would otherwise have been permissible. These sources are: (1), a memoir dictated by Perron after his retirement, reproduced in *Martineau*, pp. 165-178.

from the archives of the Marquis de Brantes and extensively quoted, in translation, hereafter : (2), the memoirs of Louis Bourquin, the MS. of which was discovered in 1914 in the hands of a Frankfort book-seller by (Sir) J. P. Thompson, I. C. S., and by him published in the *Journal* of the Panjab Historical Society in 1923 (vol. IX, pp. 36-70).<sup>1</sup>

Perron's statement of his case may be thus summarised : where it is silent or deficient (for it is only a fragment, since his full memoirs were burnt by him in mysterious circumstances), it has been supplemented by the facts stated by his 'official' biographer, M. Martineau.

After Perron's stormy but successful interview with Scindia at Ujjain in March 1803, the idea of retirement recurred to him. He had amassed a large private fortune, and he was in the fiftieth year of a life which had seen little or no freedom from activity and responsibility. Though his power had ostensibly increased, it was actually always and necessarily dependent on the whim of an Oriental ruler and his intriguing advisers, with whom as masters it was impossible for Perron to feel any real security in his high post. He knew, too, that an attempt on his life might not improbably follow his interview with Scindia. He therefore took preliminary steps to leave India : the treaty of Amiens (2 March, 1802), of which the news had reached India not very long before, made an opening for him to leave Scindia's service and traverse English territory honourably. And in the then existing peaceful relations between the English and the Marathas there seemed no obstacle to his retirement.

So he sent his English aide-de-camp, John Beckett, to Cawnpore to find out from Lake the conditions under which he would be allowed to travel down to Calcutta and embark for Europe; and under date 5 April, 1803, he received intimation that the Governor-General would accord him every facility for his projected journey. One may picture the satisfaction with which Wellesley contemplated the disappearance from Hindustan of his foremost military rival; and that he felt that for Perron the way should indeed be made easy to the coast. He was to be allowed an escort of 400 horse and 600 sepoy as far as Lucknow, where he would be treated with every respect and consideration. Receiving special passports there, he would go on to Calcutta where, the Governor-General assured him, "*je le recevrai a ses desirs, et ou*

1. Bourquin's memoirs were unknown to M. Martineau, though his life of Perron did not appear till 1929.

*je lui procurerai tous les moyens pour faciliter son voyage en Europe."*

In his memoir Perron tell us of his mission to Europe. "For a long time Scindia had seen that war was inevitable. He had sent me all my dispatches for the French government, as well as my instructions and full authority to negotiate. He asked for a body of French troops which would be in his pay, and he would be willing to cede to the French the sovereignty over the rich province called the Doab." Whether Perron was to return to India at the head of these French troops, or whether he was to remain in France enjoying the fruits of his viceroyalty and advising the First Consul on Indian affairs, does not appear; perhaps the point had not been settled, and in any case the decision would not rest with Perron alone.

But by the end of April the outlook in Hindustan was not so promising as it had been in the beginning; and Perron made no immediate use of the Governor-General's permission. It soon became apparent that the peace not only of Hindustan but of Europe was at hazard. War between Scindia and the English grew daily nearer; and the peace of Amiens could clearly not last much longer. Perron judged that his honour forbade him to continue in correspondence with those who would, in all probability, soon be at war with his country and his master; and, to put it on the lowest basis, he must soon have given up any hope of removing himself and his fortune, *via* Calcutta and the Cape to France, in the near future. He therefore broke off all correspondence with Lake and remained at his headquarters at Koil.

It was not long before he was engaged upon a plan of campaign against the British. This plan is preserved in the pages of L. F. Smith, who remarks that it does credit to Perron's judgment and military talents. Scindia with the whole horde of irregular horse was to invade the Nizam's dominions and so intimidate that ruler into abandoning his alliance with the English; The Bhonsla of Nagpur was similarly to force his way into Bengal and burn its rich towns and richer crops; Holkar was to scatter his cavalry over Bihar and Benares, whilst Ambaji laid waste Oudh and the Doab. Whilst the irregulars were thus employed, Perron with three of the Brigades would defend the passage of the Jamna; Holkar's four brigades of regulars would hold the English towards Surat; whilst Scindia's remaining regulars barred the way to Hindustan through the Ajanta pass, and the

Bhonsla's *gardi* battalions similarly held the Kasaberi ghat. Thus 115,000 irregular horse and 94 battalions of regulars, in strong defensive positions, would have opposed Lake and Wellesley; and it is safe to say with L. F. Smith that had this plan been adopted the war would have been long and bloody, though it would ultimately have resulted in success for the British.

Perron's next problem concerned his officers. His Brigades, he tells us, "were or should have been each commanded by a colonel, a major, eight captains and sixteen lieutenants; but the difficulty of finding reliable Europeans led to the establishment of officers being rarely complete . . . On account of the difficulty of procuring Europeans and above all of getting Frenchmen, whom the English prevented as far as they could from seeking service with the Princes of the country, we were obliged to engage almost anyone who offered himself for employment; and the majority of the majors, captains and lieutenants were Englishmen, or the natural sons of Englishmen by women of the country." As soon as they realised that hostilities were inevitable, both Scindia and the English saw that in this preponderance of British officers lay the great, and perhaps the only important, weakness of the Brigades as a fighting machine. Scindia determined on a purge of all whose loyalty to him was suspect, and adopted the old expedient of a Test. "Wishing to find out whom he could trust in the event of a breach," Perron relates, Scindia "gave me the order to administer indiscriminately to all the officers, whether European, half-caste or native, an oath to serve faithfully against all probable or possible enemies whatsoever; and to dispense with the services of all who refused to subscribe to this.

"When I received this order, the four Brigades were disposed as follows. The First (Colonel Pohlmann) was always with the Prince and was at all times under his immediate orders and out of my control. The second (Colonel Hessing) was in the Doab, on the left bank of the Jamna. The third (Lieutenant-Colonel Bourquin) was in the Sikh country, where . . . I had sent it to facilitate their reunion with our army. The fourth (Colonel Dudrenec) was in the Deccan, to which province Scindia had summoned it. Only the cavalry remained to me. I therefore sent to all the Brigadiers the order to have the oath required by the Prince administered in their respective Brigades. The Second and Third Brigades, the only ones which were not far distant from me, carried out the order; and almost all the Englishmen

and sons of Englishmen resigned. Colonel Dudrenec alone did not have the oath administered in his command, fearing (so he wrote to me) lest he should lose his officers; but as the object of the Prince was really to find an honest pretext for expelling them from his army, I enjoined M. Dudrenec to administer it at all costs. But from this moment I heard no more of him and had no knowledge whatever of his movements." Captain William Long, an English officer in the Maratha service, who was, at this time, actually in command of Perron's bodyguard at Aligarh, has left an account of how he saw the war-clouds gathering and continually tried to extract from John Beckett,\* Perron's English aide-de-camp and confidential secretary, some information as to how the British subjects in Scindia's army stood. "After several interviews with Captain Beckett, from whom I could draw nothing," he writes, "at last I received an official letter accompanying certain articles of war to be executed upon oath. These documents I returned with my resignation, although I did not positively know of any actual hostilities. I resigned on the 19th August, 1803. . . . My contract with Scindia [when I entered his service] at Bombay was conditional not to war with the British, and I believe General de Boigne's was much the same. That British officers in His Highness's forces would be considered free from any engagement and at full liberty to depart was well known and talked of amongst the sepoys of the Brigades."

Whilst Scindia was seeking to rid his army of its British officers, the Marquis Wellesley on the other side was making equally strenuous efforts to recall them. Secret enquiries had been for some time in progress, with a view to ascertaining whether all the Englishmen and sons of Englishmen might be counted on to leave Scindia if and when he should find himself at war with the British. The result of the investigations must have reassured the Governor-General; and when on 29th August 1803, after war had been declared, he issued a proclamation calling on British subjects in the Maratha service to return to their allegiance, and promising them that they would not lose pecuniarily by doing so, nearly every one of them immediately complied. (There were a few who did not; some were deserters from the Company's forces and may have had more to fear from compliance than from refusal: some did not receive authentic news of the proclamation for a consi-

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See appendix II

derable time, which having regard to the communications of that time and the existing state of confusion is not remarkable ; and there were a few special cases, such as Beckett, for whom see Appendix II. Three, indeed,—Vickers, Dodd and Ryan—were executed by the Marathas for attempting to leave; but these were in Holkar's service, not Scindia's).

The benefits offered by the Marquis Wellesley to British subjects in the enemy's armies were by an astute stroke extended, in another clause of the proclamation, to all other European officers serving the Marathas, who equally were guaranteed—provided they reported themselves at British headquarters within three months—a pension, to continue for the duration of the war, equivalent to the pay they had been receiving from the Marathas; and prospects of employment under the British flag and than a free passage to Europe were also held out. The proclamation, which was broadcast with some skill, achieved an immediate effect as regards British subjects, as has been shown; at first the other Europeans mostly preferred to watch the turn of events, for they had three months in which to make up their minds and much might happen in that time. But at least the proclamation, with its evocation of the dreams of every soldier in the East—a pension and a passage Home—tended to turn their thoughts towards British territory and away from Scindia; and many a French adventurer who had made his little fortune or had abandoned the prospect of ever doing so, must have wondered if now was not the time to escape from the net that seemed to be drawing closer round his Maratha masters.

Hostilities had broken out before the problem of the officers had reached a settlement. Indeed, the formal declaration of war took place on 6th August 1803; but it was not for another fortnight or so that battle was joined. Perron tells us that his point of concentration for the three Brigades with which, according to his plan of campaign, he was to hold the line of the Jamna, was Muttra; and that as far back as July he had sent orders to the most distant of them, the Fourth under Dudrenec, to march there. "A month's easy marching would have been enough to bring him to the point of concentration," he says, "and I have never known why at the end of two months he had barely covered sixty leagues." I sent orders to Bourquin to dispatch in advance to me at Muttra the Sikhs with whom he had allied himself, and to proceed with his Brigade [the Third] to Delhi to escort the Emperor to Muttra. I gave the same order to the Second Brigade,

which in the absence of its brigadier, M. George Hessing (who had asked for leave owing to his father's death), was commanded by its major, M. Geslin; and finally, having calculated that everything would be ready for the Emperor to leave Delhi about the beginning of September, I had sent him seventy of my camels, fifty of my best horses, eleven of my finest elephants richly caparisoned in gold and silver, etc. Further, I had sent the Treasurer, who had in his control all the army money and nearly eight millions of my private property; and finally, I had made ready outside Delhi all the Emperor's tents, pavilions and equipment. His departure was fixed for the 4th September at one in the afternoon."

This, then, was the position. Of Dudrenec, Perron had no news and there was no prospect of his Brigade concentrating at Muttra according to plan: Perron must have realised that Dudrenec was, not by any means for the first time during his career as a military adventurer in India, contemplating a change of 'allegiance'. But everything else was in train for the concentration: all was ready for the Emperor, the Second and Third Brigades, and the Sikh contingent to unite at Muttra and take their stand there to meet the English. Let us now move forward ourselves to meet the English who reached Koil and Aligarh on 29th August.

### 5. The Loss of Aligarh

The Maratha forces at Koil and Aligarh (Perron's house at Koil was only half a mile from the fortress of Aligarh, so the two places may be treated as one) consisted of the garrison of the fortress, commanded by Pedron; eight or nine thousand cavalry, including 2,500 to 3,000 regulars under the French captain Fleury; and doubtless, the bodyguard battalion. On the previous day nine English officers in Scindia's service had left for Agra with Perron's consent and indeed by his orders. Some others remained at Koil but played no active part in events.

No technical military account of the battle seems necessary. Perron, who had no cause to congratulate himself, dismisses it with hardly a word; and L. F. Smith merely says: "As the British army moved on Koil and began to form, it was a fine opportunity for Perron to make a bold charge with his cavalry; but he was intimidated and confounded, his indecision ran through the ranks of cavalry and they fled in all directions, after receiving a few rounds from the British flying artillery." James Skinner, an Eurasian witness on the Maratha



side, speaks to having seen Perron, hatless and dishevelled, trying vainly to rally his men, and crying as he galloped past : "Get away, there is nothing to be done here. The rascals will not stand, I don't trust them. Goodbye, Mr. Skinner, all is lost !" Let Perron resume his own story. "In consequence I withdrew to Muttra, to wait there for the Emperor and to receive both him and also the Sikhs whom I had ordered Bourquin to send me and whose arrival I expected hourly. I caused to be constructed a bridge of boats over the Jamna to facilitate the passage of the army, for the safety of which I took every precaution in my power. I had safe-guarded the town of Delhi, which is situated on the right bank of the Jamna, by seizing all the boats on both banks for more than fifty leagues above and below the city, so that the enemy could not approach to attack or harass the Emperor on the march; and I had sent Captain Fleury with all the cavalry to dislodge the English from a small station [Anupshahr] occupied by them. Fleury carried out this mission with complete success ; he defeated the English, burnt their camp, and made their commander, Lieutenant-Colonel Cunningham, surrender; taking him and about eight hundred of his men prisoners on parole. Having dealt with all these points I waited, confident in being master of the situation and that I had done everything in my power for the Prince whom I served.

"But at the very moment when I thought I was giving the Prince, who had honoured me with his whole trust, proofs of my zeal for his service, and at the same time was being of some use to my country, the most abominable treacheries arose to destroy the hopes which I cherished in my heart and to fill my soul with the blackest bitterness; and these treacheries followed one after another with such speed that I had hardly time to learn the details of one, and to strive to counteract before I received the news of another—and in less than seven or eight days all was destroyed before my very eyes, and I was completely abandoned."<sup>6</sup>

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6. It will be noted that Perron makes no mention of his formal supersession as commander-in-chief, by Ambaji Inglia, the Maratha leader, in August 1803. His silence is perhaps due to his consistent abstention from all criticism of Scindia; but is remarkable since all writers treat it as a contributory factor of his downfall. L. F. Smith, for instance, says that at the Maratha court, "the poise of the scales was suddenly turned against him by the superior

[Contd. on page 33]

"I had collected in the fortress of Aligarh, a place which its works and site made almost impregnable, all my munitions of war, all my ordnance stores, and all my private effects which I had sent there. I had also sent there treasure amounting to six lakhs of rupees in specie, and the fort was furnished with troops and stores sufficient to sustain a siege of several years. But on the 3rd September I learnt from one letter of two which the officer commanding the fort, M. Pedron, sent me, that the English had appeared and had called upon him to surrender within 24 hours; but that he had obtained 48."

Perron's reply has been preserved. He gives its date as 3rd September, but a British source dates it the 1st.<sup>7</sup> "It is perfectly natural," he wrote, "that when an army wishes to take a fortress, it should make an assault; and the solution for which you ask me, is equally natural namely, to defend it to the last drop of blood. I have just learnt, with much difficulty, that Mr. Longcraft has been several times allowed to enter the fortress. What am I to understand from that? What am I to conclude from such an astonishing procedure? I order you not to admit either this gentleman or any other person, whosoever he may be, nor to listen to any proposal regarding the surrender of the fortress. Put guns everywhere, look round everywhere, hearten the troops, and take good heart yourself, too, for you seem to me to have great need of it. Can these gentlemen really find their way so easily into the fort, or are you wanting to make way for them yourself? Think of your honour, recall to your memory those little forts at Sarsni, Bijaigarh, Kachawra and elsewhere: and remember what you yourself said. Let your actions testify to the truth of your words, or all the world will say that Colonel Pedron talked much but did nothing. In a very few days you will see a huge army on the plain

*Contd. from page 32]*

weight of twenty-five lakhs of rupees which Ambaji was compelled to give Scindia as a present and for which he required the *subahdari* of Hindustan and the supersession of Perron. By appointing Ambaji to the *subah* of Hindustan, Scindia delivered Perron to his most implacable enemy: the rapid arrival of Ambaji would have assuredly drained his purse, if he had spared his life." But I cannot look on this supersession as a major factor, for Ambaji in the event took no effective part in the events that followed up to Perron's departure. It might, of course, be said for Perron that, his successor having been appointed, he was free to depart.

7. Martineau, p. 158 n, quoting *Asiatic Annual Register*, 1804, 'State Papers', p. 258.

of Aligarh, not to listen to the arguments of Mr. Longcraft but to give a proof of their steadfastness and loyalty."

This letter was immediately followed by another : "You will have received the reply which you must make to General Lake's proposals. I should never have believed that you would have thought for an instant of agreeing to them. On you, perhaps, depends the fortune of this entire country, whether it is to be free or in bondage. Remember that you are a Frenchman and do nothing to tarnish your nation's honour. I hope in a very few days to make the English general go away more quickly than he came. Be calm on that count : either the Emperor's army or General Lake's army will be buried in front of the fortress of Aligarh, that is provided the latter does not find it necessary to begone before we arrive, in order to take care of his own territory. Ranjit Singh, the raja of Lahore, has crossed the Sutlej with an army of twenty-five thousand men and will be with me in a fortnight. Nizam Ali Khan is dead, his son has withdrawn his army and declared war on the English. There is nothing to fear : do your duty and defend the fort so long as one stone of it rests on another. Once more, remember your country ! Millions of men have their eyes fixed on you."

Of these letters Perron says : "I hastened to send him immediate orders that he should take heed not to surrender such a fortress, but on the contrary should cut the road which led to it to the full depth of the ditch; and whilst I was busying myself about sending another officer to take command there—for I was resolved to blow it up rather than yield it to the English—on the morning of 4th September he opened its gates to the English and they entered the fort. Some of the garrison, seeing themselves betrayed by the commanding officer, sought to defend themselves; but, surprised, without orders and without a leader, their resistance was in vain. They did a good deal of damage to the English but were cut to pieces, every man of them; and I afterwards learnt that my letter of the 3rd had been sent to the English general as soon as it arrived."

All other accounts of the taking of Aligarh are from the English side and do not suggest any treachery on the part of Pedron. The accepted version is that a British column was guided into the fortress by an Irish ex-officer of Scindia's, John Lloyd Lucan. They blew open one of the gateways and forced their way inwards, meeting with a stiff resistance when they neared the centre of the citadel, which they

finally overcame. Pedron, who had undoubtedly been wavering, had previously been deposed by his own troops who had appointed a Rajput officer to the command in his place : he was taken by the storming-party and led to Lake.<sup>8</sup>

Of Perron's three great fortresses, Aligarh, Delhi and Agra, all well-stocked with men, munitions and treasure—public and private, the first was now in the hands of the English. Perron, waiting at Muttra for the great concentration which in the event never occurred, must have meditated bitterly on the ignominy he had suffered from the English at Koil. Now they had Aligarh, too, and for the first time he must have wondered what the end of it all would be. Agra, the nearest and greatest of his citadels, seemed safe for the moment; but at Delhi were not only treasure and the Emperor's person but also the mobile troops which constituted his striking force. He could no longer pin his faith in fortresses alone, even if they were well nigh impregnable, provisioned for several years, and commanded by his near relations. An army to wield was what he needed, with which to chastise the English who had so rashly invaded Hindustan, and with inferior numbers.

## 6. The Capture of Delhi

The battle of Delhi and the siege of Agra are among the most famous of Lord Lake's victories, and are well described from the British point of view in several standard works. In the following pages they will for the first time be seen through French eyes on the Maratha side, so that we may, in the words of the Duke of Wellington, try to understand what was going on "on the other side of the hill".

Let us take Delhi first. One of the principal lieutenants of de Boigne and Perron was the former's compatriot, Louis Dugeon. The little that Compton has about him proves to be based almost entirely on a long letter of Dugeon's which is printed by Saint-Genis. Since then Perron's and Bourquin's narratives have come to light and add much to our knowledge. Apart from a statement of his own to the effect that he was in Paris in 1787, we first hear of Dugeon at Chandernagore in 1790, as an officer of the French sepoys there. On his refusing to take the 'civic oath' at the hands of the new revolutionary National Committee, he was imprisoned for four or five months but released in October. He probably joined the Maratha

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8. He was a brother-in-law of Perron's.

service, then under reorganization by de Boigne, soon afterwards. As to his antecedents, writing in 1802, he stated that his father and mother were then alive and living at the Chateau de Bergin, near Hyenne, about four leagues from Chambery in Savoy where de Boigne was born. His brother was a general in the Sardinian army. Louis Dugeon may thus have had some previous acquaintance with de Boigne who may indeed have invited him to join Scindia's service.

It is from May 1794 that our knowledge of Dugeon becomes more detailed. He was then serving with Scindia's Second Brigade of regulars as brigade-major, with pay at Rs. 400 monthly. Before long he succeeded to the command of a battalion, as the following translation of a letter (now in the possession of a ferryman at Hoshangabad on the Narbadda river) shows :—

“Narbadda Camp, 22 December 1794.

Balkishan, Brahman, has provided me with a boat to cross the Narbadda. He has given me every satisfaction.

(Signed) DRUGEON,

Commandant of the Sahibzada Battalion.”

The ‘Sahibzada Battalion’, the ‘Prince’s Own’, was evidently a *corps d’elite* and probably belonged to the First Brigade, since Compton records that Dugeon went with that body—then under Perron’s command—to the Deccan, becoming its brigadier in 1797 when Perron succeeded to the chief command of Scindia’s forces.

When commanding the First Brigade, Dugeon saw a little fighting at Poona in 1797, when with two brigades he and Ghatge Rao attacked the latter’s rival Amrit Rao. Then he got into some grave but vaguely-defined trouble, often referred to in the letters of his comrades and himself but never specified. Probably he intrigued and burnt his fingers badly, and de Boigne was no longer there to protect him. Deposed by his own officers, he was superseded as brigadier by Captain Vitalis Duprat, a Frenchman related by marriage to Perron and other influential adventurers but otherwise undistinguished. For a while he was in disgrace and lacked employment. Early in 1800 he was restored to favour and appointed *kilahdar* or Commandant of the Fort of Delhi, and ten months later to the command also of the *subah* (province) of Delhi, having in this latter capacity the custody of the Emperor’s person.

The long letter quoted by Saint-Genis and mentioned above

enables us to take stock of Dugeon's position at this period. It was dated 30 April, 1802, and was written by Dugeon to de Boigne at Chambery. After a detailed summary of the political and military situation in the Maratha domains and of news of the movements of various fellow-officers, Dugeon turns to his own personal affairs and says that he is very desirous of returning to Europe. Though he has by no means amassed a fortune, he has thirty thousand rupees invested in the English Company's securities, and as much more besides as is necessary to pay the cost of his passage Home. But the matter is complicated -indeed, he is *fort embarrassé*—by his attachment to a woman of the country whom he dearly loves, and whom he has taken to himself in order to help him forget the past troubles. How can he take her to Europe with him, and yet he does not wish to leave her behind. (He emphasises this last clause by underlining it). He asks de Boigne's advice—de Boigne himself had more than one Indian consort and took one to Europe : she died in Sussex and is buried in Horsham churchyard. Dugeon goes on to say that his lady is the niece of Nawab Salim Khan and only seventeen years old : she repeatedly avers that she would die rather than part from him. He informs de Boigne of the nature of his duties at Delhi, and asks for news of his parents near Chambery. His two appointments are not lucrative, he says, for they only carry pay at Rs. 800 monthly; but he has been forced to accept them for the sake of his reputation, and after all he thinks that he could find no more honourable post since the person, the correspondence, and the whole household of the Emperor are entrusted to him.

As soon as hostilities broke out in 1803, intrigues, always rife amongst the foreign officers in Scindia's service as amongst their Maratha employers, became widespread. Both at Delhi and at Agra the goal was seen to be not the earnest prosecution of the campaign but the possession of the huge treasures in the forts at both places. It is not possible to follow each plot and counterplot, but the situation that developed seems to have been this. Dugeon, now a major, still commanded the Delhi Fort and had the custody of the puppet Emperor, and the greater part of the Maratha treasure there seems to have been under his effective control. Two regular brigades were at the Mogul capital, commanded respectively by Bourquin and by a Major Gelin or Geslin; but the rank and file were in a state bordering on mutiny. Dugeon hated Perron, to whom he attributed his down-

fall. Bourquin hated Perron too, though his motives were more complex. And to complete the triangle, Dugeon and Bourquin were themselves at loggerheads : they were rivals for the treasure.

Bourquin being senior to Geslin took command of both brigades and was promptly met with an ultimatum from his men. "Unwilling to have any foe behind them when marching against the English", he writes, "they informed me that they intended to compel Major Dugeon, who commanded in Delhi, to evacuate the place. In order to effect this resolve, some men were sent to the gates and the Prince's (Scindia's) standard was displayed. The Major fired on it : the army promptly began to entrench." We may be sure that what the army really wanted was the treasure. Bourquin, who wanted it too, was willing to back them, up to a point. "I was against a siege", he says, "as the end did not justify the delay. Moreover, I should easily be able to gain access to the place". In other words, he realised that to obtain possession of the treasure was not enough; it was also necessary to ensure that he would be able to get away with it. He therefore wished to beat the English first, and then to take and carry away the treasure.

Eventually Bourquin prevailed upon his men to obey him, though we cannot rely on his own account of the method by which he effected his end. His narrative is full of braggadocio and protests of his loyalty to France and Scindia; and the treasure is hardly mentioned at all. Soon he heard that Lake's army was marching on Delhi. He crossed the Jamna at night to meet it, accompanied by some—though not all—of his battalions, who must have felt considerable reluctance at putting the river between them and the treasure, which thus remained at the mercy of Dugeon and his men in the Fort. It is interesting to find that he writes : "Major Dugeon, fearing my vengeance should I defeat the English, sent me during the night his capitulation. I signed it without raising any objections, though I quite understood his motives". These motives were undoubtedly to establish a claim to a share of the spoil should Bourquin prove victorious in the coming battle.

But the victory did not fall to him. After a considerable resistance his men were defeated and routed. "Abandoning hope of rallying my troops in the midst of the general confusion", writes Bourquin, "I recrossed the Jamna and placed myself under the protection of the Raja of Ballabgarh. Next day (12th September) I learned that all

my effects which had remained in Delhi had been looted by the Emperor's people as soon as they heard of the loss of the battle. Major Drugeon, who had his part in the looting, used my bullocks for the transport of his belongings when, after coming to terms with the English, he left Hindustan. He sold them subsequently at Farrukhabad". On 14th September Bourquin surrendered to the British.

Perron's version of events at Delhi, which we will now give by way of contrast, is that of a bitterly disappointed man with a strong strain of avarice, who in the space of a week saw all his ambitions destroyed and a great part of his wealth lost, partly by force of arms and partly by his trusted officers—friends or relations all of them—turning against him. This version has value as biographical material, but as a historical source is unreliable since the writer was neither unbiassed nor present at the scenes which he describes.

"At the same time that I learnt of this wicked treachery and of the loss of such an important position as Aligarh with all my munitions, stores and money, and whilst I vainly awaited the arrival of the Sikhs and the 4th Brigade, I received a letter from Major Geslin which informed me that, according to my orders, he had led the Second Brigade before Delhi and had camped on the left bank of the river, where Bourquin, who was on the right bank, had come to pay him a visit. The next day he had returned the call but on leaving the tent Bourquin had him arrested and taken to the main guard, and had relieved him of the Second Brigade.

"This Bourquin was a Frenchman, and had deserted from the English whom he had served as a private soldier. I received him and hid him after his desertion and, believing him an honourable man, gave him a post in the Brigades as an officer. For a long time he had enjoyed my confidence and friendship, my purse had always been at his service, and finally I had promoted him to the rank of lieutenant-colonel and had entrusted him with the important mission to the Sikhs; but all that I had done for this viper only caused him to rend my bosom.

"Instead of sending the Sikhs ahead as I had ordered him to do, he had retained them with him on various pretexts; and, having taken over the Second Brigade as I have noted above, he found himself master of all my former troops in that area. As I have said, the



Emperor was due to leave the fort and move into his tents on the 4th September at one in the afternoon, preparatory to going to Muttra. On the night of the 3rd/4th this rebel had the Emperor's tents struck, ransacked all his baggage; and on the following morning, the day the Emperor should have started, he struck the Emperor's flag and hoisted that of the rebellion, having himself proclaimed commander-in-chief with a salute of twenty-one guns.

"The city of Delhi was left defenceless, with only a small garrison which was incapable of resistance : Bourquin easily overwhelmed it with his troops, and abandoning the town to pillage, seized the bankers, financiers and the general treasury which was unfortunately then located there.

"The garrison having been obliged to withdraw into the citadel which was commanded by a French officer, M. Dugeon, Bourquin called upon this officer to give up to him the fortress as well as the treasure which it contained. As Dugeon refused, he besieged the citadel. When I, at Muttra, heard details of all this, I could not believe that they were true, so strong was my trust in this man and so utterly absurd and impracticable did the whole affair appear to me; and, in the circumstances in which we found ourselves, so little advantageous to its author. The only European whom I had with me was my secretary. I hastened to write to Bourquin all that a commander and a friend could write in such circumstances. I pointed out in the strongest terms all the harm to public affairs and to our country which might result from his disobedience and his ambition : I begged him to come to me so that I might communicate to him my plans and the Prince's, assuring him that it was not in the least in order to save powers which I was ready to abandon that I urged him to return to me, but only for the sake of the public weal.

"Not content with having written him this letter, some hours later I sent to him my secretary of state, a man extremely loved and respected in the army and by the Prince, and one who knew all our plans, with an order to communicate them to Bourquin. This I did, persuaded that when he learnt the harm which his deeds were doing to his country, he would change his course of conduct.

"I gave the secretary one of my elephants and a mounted escort. When he reached the camp, and before he had even entered it, he was arrested and led to Bourquin who kept him alone with him in his tent for more than an hour. The secretary carried out his mission and

explained all our plans, etc., but at the end Bourquin said to him : 'Your master is nothing, I am everything !' and sent him to the main-guard with orders that he was to be allowed to speak to no one.

"Learning that my two messengers had thus been arrested, I tried the scheme of writing to M. Gueriniere, the one of the two remaining French officers in the Third Brigade whom I judged most likely to carry out my orders. I sent him a copy of the Prince's commands, enjoined him to read them to Bourquin and then to call upon him to obey them : in the event of his refusing to do so, to place him under arrest in my name and then to take over command of the Brigade. Finally, if Bourquin was unwilling to obey the orders of the Prince or of myself, I told Gueriniere to blow his brains out as a traitor and rebel.

"To this letter was appended a proclamation which I enjoined him to have read to the army, in which I urged the troops to remain faithful to their Prince and to their duty; saying that we were on the point of a battle which from our strength and position we would certainly win, and in consequence would conquer vast tracts of the enemy's country. And I promised the troops, in the name of the Prince, two months' pay and a bounty after the victory was won; and to each soldier, according to his rank, a portion of the conquered lands. But although my messenger delivered my dispatches to M. Gueriniere, he lacked the courage to carry out my orders : he communicated them to M. Bourquin and they were ineffectual.

"At the same time, the Emperor, finding himself besieged in the citadel and believing he had another Ghulam Qadir at his gates, resolved to let the English know of the situation he was in, requesting them to come to his assistance. Thereupon the English advanced on Delhi; but by reason of the precautions which I had taken to safeguard that place their arrival would have been useless to the Emperor had it not been for the imbecility of Bourquin.

"The English army found itself on the left bank of the river Jamna, the waters of which bathed the walls of Delhi on the right. For more than fifty leagues above and below the place where the English were there was not a single boat. They would consequently never have been able to cross the river except by building a bridge, which would have taken them a long time and would have afforded me plenty of time to reflect. But Bourquin (of whom I have heard it said that his plan was to turn the circumstance to profit by looting Delhi and the

Emperor's treasure and then to withdraw to the country of the Sikhs) seeing at the outset that part of his plan had miscarried from the resistance he had met with at the citadel (for which he was perhaps unprepared) and the remainder of his plan was ruined by the arrival of the English army—thinking only of his private interests and sacrificing to them public policy—wishing to find a means of saving part of his loot—Bourquin doubtless judged that the only course which remained for him to take to succeed in this last purpose was to surrender to the English; but this was nevertheless almost impossible without sacrificing the army to his cupidity. So, therefore, in order to be able to fly without danger, he made the army believe that he wanted to attack the English, who were actually greatly inferior to him in numbers. On the 11th September he led his troops across the river and joined battle with the English; but at the outset of the battle he and the officers who had followed him in his mutiny took to flight and finally surrendered to the English. The army, twenty-five to thirty thousand strong, betrayed, abandoned by its leader and its officers, was easily defeated; and the English after this easy victory took advantage of the boats which Bourquin had brought them to cross the river and take possession of Delhi, seven days after Bourquin's revolt and the treachery of the commandant of Aligarh. Thus, in this short space of time, I lost by the rascality of officers under my orders all my munitions, my stores, my equipment, a hundred and twenty guns, two Brigades destroyed in the action of the eleventh, and about 40 millions in specie—some being the public wealth and some my private property."

So ends Perron's version of events at Delhi. As for Dugeon, he made the best of a bad job. He had to give up the fort to Lake, but he tried to deposit the treasure with the old blind Emperor under the pretext that it was the property of the *de jure* sovereign and not of the *de facto* ruler Scindia. Lake, however, denounced this as a fraudulent transaction and the booty was handed over to the prize-agents for distribution to the British army. Dugeon was deported to Calcutta and died at Chandernagore in 1805, not at Nice about 1824 as stated by Compton.

### **The Fall of Agra**

Fresh from his victory at Delhi, Lake arrived at Agra on 4th October, 1803, and encamped not far from the Fort. On the 7th October the infantry took up a new position, and on the next day the cavalry

did likewise. On the 9th an offensive and defensive treaty was concluded with the Raja of Bharatpur. These preliminaries at an end, operations began in earnest.

What was the situation inside the fortress? As soon as he arrived before Agra, Lake, as Thorn tells us, "had sent a summons to the Fort, but no answer was returned, owing as it afterwards appeared to the confusion which prevailed among the garrison, who conceived so much jealousy of their European officers as to place them in confinement." These officers were Colonel George William Hessing, the Commandant of the Fort, of Dutch, French and Indian descent; Major Hugh Sutherland, a Scotsman, brother of the more famous Colonel Robert Sutherland; and Major Louis Derridon, the French Eurasian.

Now Perron had married Derridon's sister : Hessing's father had married another sister : and Robert Sutherland had married a sister of Hessing's. Further, Perron had previous to the outbreak of war sent to Agra Fort not only his wife and two children but also 24 lakhs of rupees out of his 'private' fortune. He had 6 lakhs more lodged at Aligarh, in the fort of which Pedron— who had married yet another sister of Derridon's — was commandant; and yet more money at Delhi with his banker Harsukh Rai, and at Koil in his own country-house; whilst he is said to have remitted another 28 lakhs to safe hands in Calcutta. He thus had a considerable interest in the fate of the Fort of Agra as it contained his family and a large part of his assets in Northern India, and it can hardly have been mere chance that the three senior officers there were his close relatives.

After his half-hearted demonstrations before Aligarh at the end of August, Perron made his way to Agra "not in order to protect the place," according to Bourquin, "but to remove from it his wife and 24 lakhs, Perron sent him (Hessing) a request to this effect; but Hessing replied that he could enter Agra and take command, but so long as he (Hessing) remained in command he would be faithful to the prince and would defend the place against the latter's' enemies. The treasure, he said, belonged to Scindia, who alone could dispose of it. As to Perron's wife and children, he sent them to him. As Perron declined to enter the city, this was all he was able to obtain." This took place on the 4th September : the next day Perron wrote to Lake informing him that he had resigned from Scindia's service and asking permission to pass with his family, his officers and his bodyguard to Lucknow. Lake gave the necessary permission, and with this Perron disappears

from the scene in Hindustan.

His treasure influenced all the subsequent actions of the garrison of Agra. Within the fort were some 4,000 combatants, who broke into mutiny after his departure and made their European officers prisoners, their object being to possess themselves of the treasure and divide it. Outside the fort were firstly, five battalions of the 5th Brigade which had recently arrived from the Deccan under the command of Major John Brownrigg, an Irish officer with whom Captains Harriot, Marshall and Atkins also appear to have been serving; and secondly, three battalions from the 2nd and 3rd Brigades at Delhi which had escaped the carnage there and had made their way to Agra without European officers. Entrance to the Fort was denied to both these bodies by the garrison within, who wished to keep the treasure to themselves. Only the European officers were admitted, probably because the garrison thought that the more hostages they had the better. But, secure as it was in their hands, the garrison did not dare to broach the treasure, for Hessing warned them that if the money were tampered with they would have to answer for it when the British arrived. Further, internal dissensions among the garrison prevented them from agreeing how the treasure should be divided among them. So the remains of the 2nd, 3rd and 5th Brigades settled on the glacis outside the Fort, and in the city; and thus the Maratha garrison of Agra was split in two by jealousy over the treasure, for Lake to deal with piecemeal.

First he tackled the seven battalions without the walls. After a severe fight and with a number of casualties he dislodged them from the glacis, the City, and the ravines round the Fort. This was on the 10th October, and two days later the survivors decided to throw in their lot with the British. On the 13th, 2,500 of them marched into the British camp and were taken into the Company's service: they were to see much campaigning later against Holkar under their old officers—both Brownrigg and Marshall died in action leading them against the Marathas.

This day, the 13th October, siege operations began in earnest. The Fort garrison at once asked for an armistice till four o'clock that afternoon, and Sutherland came over with a letter signed by himself and Hessing :-

“...Notwithstanding the past violent and unwarrantable proceedings of the people in the fort, they have at last become a little

more reasonable, from our repeatedly telling them that any further resistance on their part would avail them nothing; but on the contrary would exasperate your Excellency and the troops under your command, so as to exterminate the whole of them if a storm took place.

"Their commandants have consequently come to us this forenoon in a body, and requested of us to forward to your Excellency the accompanying proposal for the surrender of the fort, to which their respective names are affixed. Should any unforeseen deviation from this proposal take place, as we are still their prisoners we hope your Excellency will not impute to us the blame.

"Their proposal is to deliver up the fort, guns, stores, etc., to your Excellency at any time after the receipt of this you may think proper; protection to themselves and private property, after delivering up the *Sarkar's* arms and property, and to be allowed to remain in the city or go wherever their families may be."

Lake sent back a reply by an officer with Sutherland accepting the terms generally, but specifying that no money was to be carried out of the Fort. His emissary found the garrison at sixes and sevens, and soon the firing broke out afresh, and continued all night. On the 14th, Lake ordered a bombardment which at once brought the garrison to their senses, and they agreed to capitulate on the following morning. Accordingly on the 18th Scindia's troops marched out and the British entered the fortress, to find "twenty tumbrils laden with treasure, to the amount of 22 lakhs of rupees, with guns, ammunition and stores in abundance". As soon as, from the safety of Lucknow, Perron heard that the money was in the hands of the British, he put in a claim for it; but Lake was assured by the European officers in the Fort that the money was public treasure of Scindia's and not Perron's private fortune. It was accordingly declared prize-money and dealt with as such, and the Governor-General confirmed Lake's action.

Compton is of the opinion that the money originally came from revenue collections assigned to Perron for the payment of his troops, and to that extent Perron had a lawful claim to it; but that the property in it passed first to his troops after his departure and next to the British by right of conquest of those troops. Its loss long remained a grievance to Perron.

### **8. Perron Leaves Hindustan**

We will resume Perron's own narrative at the point where he

speaks of the fall of Delhi.

"This succession of treacheries by Bourquin and Pedron, and the doubtful behaviour of almost all the other officers, had spread amongst the natives such a distrust of Europeans, that the lives of those who had remained faithful were in constant danger. Twenty times they saw the sword lifted above their heads to massacre them. I myself experienced it several times and only escaped by great sacrifices of money.

"General Lake, commander-in-chief of the English army, found himself master of the greater part of Hindustan and of the Emperor's person. Without troops, without officers, without money, and in constant danger of being massacred, I was surrounded by this army. The few troopers who remained with me were no longer willing to heed the orders of Captain Fleury, their commandant; and disbanded themselves. As I have already observed, I had permission and orders from the Prince to withdraw, as well as his instructions to treat with the French government. The war between this nation and England was not yet known in India, and I therefore considered that the only service which I had it in my power to do the Prince was to get either to Pondicherry or to Europe as quickly as possible, profiting by the permission (which I still had) to traverse English territory as a retired officer, and which permission I thought I might lose at any moment if I were made a prisoner of war. Moreover, betrayed and abandoned as I was, I could be of very small use to the Prince if I had been able to get to him. Besides, how would he have looked upon me? Would he not have been justified in saying to me : "It is to you that I have entrusted the Brigades, my fortresses and the Emperors's person; it is to you that I left the choice of the officers serving under your orders : it is you who have allotted posts and employment as you have thought fit : I hardly ever interfered in such matters. It is to you alone that I have given all my trust. And now you come and tell me that your officers have betrayed you ! Why didn't you choose them better ? Why have you employed cowards and traitors who desert you at the first moment you need their services ?

"How could I have answered an angry despot who had thus spoken to me ? I could have given him no reply; and my knowledge of the courts of India made me certain that all my past services would instantly have been forgotten, and that I should have expiated the faults of my officers upon the scaffold. So I took the only

course which I considered still open to me, that of going to Pondicherry or to France.

"Before setting out I made a last advance to Bourquin. I wrote to him with my own hand, although this was very difficult owing to my having lost my right hand. I said to him : 'My dear friend, in the name of God, in the name of the Prince, in the name of our country ! I will communicate to you all the Prince's plans and all my own ; I will inform you of all my projects; I will show you how our conduct is beneficial to the interests of all, but especially to those of our country France, and that you are ruining everything. Come, and I give you my most sacred word of honour that if you are not convinced of the great value of our plans, you will be at liberty to return to your camp without the slightest insult being offered to you.'

"I swear before God that my intentions in writing to Bourquin were pure : I wished to explain all our plans to him and to enable him to follow them; I wished to hand over the chief command to him until the Prince should decide otherwise; finally, I wished to alleviate, as much as lay in my power, the evil which I had been unable to avert. But although this letter reached Bourquin on the 10th, he took no heed of it, and on the morning of the 11th he led the army to destruction.

"I wrote also to the Prince a particular account of all that had happened, notifying him at the same time that I was leaving to follow our original plans, and that I advised him to make peace with the English at any price, until better times came and he could fight them more advantageously. Finally I told him that I would await his reply at Lucknow.

"To Colonel Dudrenec, too, I wrote, saying that after all that had happened it was useless for him to continue on his way to join me, and that on the contrary I told him to turn back and lead his brigade to the Prince. Instead of following my advice, for I could not give him *orders* any longer, I learnt on my way to Lucknow that he had gone over to the English for a pension of five thousand rupees a month; and I have been further informed that on his way to Lucknow he received 10,000 rupees on account.

"Although news of the renewal of hostilities between the French and the English reached me whilst I was on my way to Lucknow, I nevertheless had no cause of complaint against the latter in respect of



their treatment of me. I remained at Lucknow about forty days to await the Prince's reply, as I had promised him I would; and, in fact, it reached me there. He was very vexed at all that had happened and complained bitterly of it to me, but nevertheless he approved of my plan to continue on my journey, which I accordingly did. Until I arrived in Bengal I nowhere received any vexation from the English; but at 30 or 40 leagues from Calcutta I was met by an English officer, who announced to me on behalf of his government that, as a Frenchman, I was made prisoner of war; he asked me to sign my parole of honour that I would not hold any correspondence with the enemies of the English, nor would I leave their territory without having obtained the permission of the government.

"At first I refused absolutely to sign this parole, pointing out that I had not come to live with the English, that I was only a private person who was traversing their territory in accordance with previously-obtained leave, without which I should certainly not have come: and, finally, that if it was sought to withdraw that permission from me, I asked leave to return whence I came. But all my representations were in vain: they made me prisoner on a boat in which we descended the river. I was not allowed to go to Calcutta, where I had directed my agents to get a country house ready for me. They had replied that I would find one prepared on my arrival, which belonged to them, about four leagues from Calcutta; but it chanced to be in the neighbourhood of that of the Marquis Wellesley, who would never allow me to occupy it and who even threatened to deport my agents to Europe for having proposed it to me.

"I asked to reside at Ghiretti, a house belonging to the French; but, under the pretext that leave to do this must be obtained from the governor-general, they kept waiting in front of the house for three days without being willing to open the doors for me, and I was obliged to eat my meals under the trees. Finally, seeing that my only course was to sign my parole, unless I was to be taken as a prisoner to Fort William, I chose the first alternative and signed.

"I could not understand how such a change had come about in the way the English treated me, but I was soon enlightened and I saw that it was all due to a new rascality of Bourquin's. He had come to Bengal a month before me, and had obtained leave to reside at Chandernagore, where he had spread a thousand falsehoods about me;

he had, without any doubt, informed the English government of the Prince's plans, and of mine, which had been communicated to him by the secretary of State whom I had sent to him. He had shown them and had made public my last letter in which I exhorted him in the name of our Country, in the name of French interests, etc., and finally he had made them fully acquainted of the object of my voyage.

Thus this scoundrel, not content with having ruined Scindia, and with having ruined me too, wished also to deprive France of the means of obtaining splendid possessions in India and of aiding an oppressed Prince, by hindering me from continuing on my voyage, in which he unfortunately succeeded only too well, for I was detained for another two years in Bengal before I was able to get away, always spied on and watched.

"During this period I received four letters from the Prince, to which I dared not reply, fearing that my letters might fall into the hands of the English, who had opened several of those addressed to me; and I contented myself with verbal replies sent by servants who had accompanied me in Hindustan."

#### 9. The case against Perron

That is Perron's case, which I have given almost *in extenso*, since it has not been made use of in any English account of the events of 1803, and indeed does not seem to have been made public till it was printed by M. Martineau in 1931. The fullest and in most respects the most valuable history of the period, the *Cambridge History of India*, vol. V, appeared two or three years too early, before M. Martineau's work was available. Perron's salient points are :—

- (a) He had a sound and well-conceived plan of campaign.
- (b) He was betrayed by Dudrenec, Pedron and Bourquin, the last being the worst.
- (c) His betrayal alone prevented him from carrying his plans into execution.
- (d) Despite his betrayal he might have carried out Scindia's mission to the French, had not Bourquin inflamed the English against him.

It is noteworthy, too, that throughout his memoir he has nothing whatever to say against Scindia and his advisers on the one hand, or against the English (except when he alleges, they were acting on false

information given by Bourquin) on the other. He does not hesitate to call his brother-in-law Pedron a coward and traitor, and in this he was justified by events. He abstains from dubbing Dudrenec the same, though in stating the bare facts of Dudrenec's failure to move his Brigade he leaves no doubt as to his opinion of the Chevalier. There is, however, one man and one alone who is the 'villain' of Perron's piece, and that is Louis Bourquin. We have seen what Perron says of Bourquin : let us now examine what Bourquin says of Perron.

Bourquin begins by charging his general with gross neglect from May 1803 onwards. From that moment, he says, everything pointed to war with the English; and Perron received definite orders from Scindia to prepare for a rupture, but "the only measures which he took were those which he could not omit without declaring himself a traitor." Further, he took no steps to prevent the English from establishing an outpost at Sasni, three leagues from Koil. And, finally, he dispatched Bourquin on a mission which he intended to fail, namely to extract both men and money from the Sikhs, which, as Perron well knew, was too much to ask from them and would have only driven them to rebellion. Nevertheless Bourquin averted the discredit which he was expected to incur by obtaining not only money but 20,000 men, and also negotiating an alliance with the Rohillas whose sixty thousand irregulars might have been very useful.

In the next count of Bourquin's indictment he sets forth the forces which, according to him, were at Perron's disposal and "which he could have collected round him in fifteen or twenty days" to resist and attack the English. By putting a formidable total against the name of nearly every discontented chieftain in Northern India, he arrives at the nice round figure of three hundred thousand fighting men, to which he adds the Second and Third Brigades at 8,000 each and "20,000 cavalry, organised in European style, trained to hard work and to manoeuvres," who certainly only existed in Bourquin's fertile imagination. "Such were the imposing forces which Perron might have had under his orders", he says, "and with which he could have been able not only to preserve the Maratha Empire but, what was more, to drive out the English from all their possessions...but instead of listening to the voice of honour a base avarice made him plunge these nations into an abyss of misfortune. Vainly did the ambassadors of these Princes urge him to give his orders for the rendezvous of the federated troops. He always found some excuse and managed in this way to

lead them on from delay to delay right up to the terrible catastrophe which he was engineering."

Bourquin continues by telling how he was ordered by Perron to report at Delhi with all the Sikhs he could collect; and sent 10,000, putting the other 10,000 in his advance guard. On 22nd August Bourquin and his column arrived at Delhi by forced marches, intending to push on to Perron at Koil; but were ordered "to encamp under the walls of Delhi, to pitch the tent of the Mogul Emperor, to persuade him to occupy it and to send him with my Brigade, which I had left in charge of one of my officers, to Agra. When I had done that I was to rejoin him alone. On the other hand, this treacherous chief removed another Brigade of 8,000 men, trained and commanded by Major Gelin, who by his orders moved out some leagues from Delhi. Thus instead of concentrating his forces, Perron was dispersing them and, under the pretence of not knowing what plan to adopt, was preventing the concentration of the auxiliary troops." Bourquin goes on to relate that though these orders surprised him, he obeyed them as a soldier should; but he was not able to persuade the aged Emperor to leave Delhi, and force he was not authorised to use. He then says that Perron was fully acquainted with the movements of Lake's army, and had known as early as 7th August that it had left Cawnpore on its march towards Koil. "If these faulty dispositions had been merely the result of ignorance or mistake and not of treachery and treason, Perron would have hastened to alter them when the enemy approached him." Gelin's [Second] Brigade could have been brought to Koil in two or three days, and with the Third [Bourquin's] and the Sikh contingent "would have been more than enough to wipe out 8,000 men," all that Lake had

So run Bourquin's charges: he now becomes explicit. "It is time to reveal the secret of this infamous conduct, he proceeds. "Perron had amassed a considerable amount of treasure. He had deposited it at Agra, where his nephew [George Hessing] was in command, at Delhi with the banker Assonerah [Harsukh Rai], in the fortress of Aligarh, and at Koil in the fortress [sic] where he resided. But he had been meditating treason for a long time, and remitted to various bankers at Calcutta in British territory, amongst others to the firm of Coqueret [Cockerell], 28 lakhs of rupees. His confidential agent in his intrigues was an Englishman named Beckett. The British Government of India knew about it and had seen with pleasure the man who, alone in these

countries, was able to check their progress, put himself in a position of dependence on them by remitting his fortune to British territory, and taking an Englishman as his confidential agent and witness of his most secret actions. This precaution showed the *arriere pensee* in Perron. The English leaders divined this; and it appeared that at this time, after secret negotiations with him, they arranged the plan of invasion which otherwise would have been absurd and impracticable with an army of 2,000 Europeans and 6,000 men of the country against a disciplined and war-trained army which was capable of being raised to 300,000 men.

"But Perron saw the storm gathering over his head. His Prince, dissatisfied with his malpractices and his independence, annoyed above all at his refusal to come when summoned, and at the weakness of the succours he had sent at the most critical moment, had given him a successor in the person of Ambaji whom Perron had long disliked and who was already on the way to relieve him. From that moment his only thought was for his personal safety and for the safety of his treasure. These were the real causes of the inaction and apparent indecision of this man who till then had displayed the greatest activity in all his operations."

Bourquin then draws a picture of Lake with his little army marching on Koil "in complete confidence" that Perron had made the way easy for him; of the Marathas "throwing their turbans at his feet and entreating him in the name of honour to let them smash the English battalions-to which Perron replied: "The first man who cocks his piece or fires a shot, I will have him hanged;" of the troops throughout the retreat "loudly accusing him of treachery and heaping curses on him;" and of three thousand Maratha cavalry coming to the Third Brigade on the following day and proclaiming their indignation, which Bourquin had to share. He then turns to events at Delhi, of which his version is given in Chapter VII.

Returning to Perron, Bourquin tells us that after his defeat at Koil he retired to a village five leagues away where "the English took good care not to molest him: he had shown them too clearly his devotion to their interests. ... He beguiled his cavalry with the hope of booty and sent the whole of it under Captain Fleury to make a raid on English territory." On 4th September Perron went to Agra to collect his wife and 24 lakhs of rupees which he had left there under George Hessian's protection. On the following day he wrote to Lake

to say that he had quitted Scindia's service and desired a passport for Lucknow, leaving Bourquin to cope with the situation at Delhi and indeed in Hindustan generally.

Of Perron's surrender Bourquin writes: "Deserting the service of one's Prince in presence of the enemy! Can there be more clear treason? Why not have gone back to the Prince? Why not have chosen a fortress in which to resist. ...? Why fly before the enemy without even a fight? Why refuse the assistance of his allies and disperse his forces instead of concentrating them? Why remove the artillery from the forts?<sup>1</sup> And why dishonour his Prince and so many brave Europeans under his orders? I know that in their published dispatches the English have tried to palliate his infamous conduct, though well aware of its odious nature. They accepted his account and assigned as causes, first the nomination of his successor, and secondly, the perfidy and ingratitude of his European officers. But did Hindustan belong to Perron as his private property? Had Scindia in giving him command lost the right of removing him from that command? Was the fact that his successor had been nominated sufficient to relieve Perron of all his obligations? Was he entitled to deliver up the country to the enemies of the Prince whom he served and, what is more, to the everlasting enemies of his own country? As to the perfidy and ingratitude of his European officers, in what did they consist? Only in this, that these officers refused to follow his example. ... They only ceased to recognise his authority when his treason was manifest, and when the army was so indignant at it that they could never have said a word in his justification without risking massacre."

In this strain Bourquin continues, his conclusion being that Perron "was a traitor to his Prince, to the Army, to the cause of France," who had "gorged himself with wealth" and still "owned the finest jewels in India"; whilst as for himself, Bourquin feels "that I have fulfilled all my duties, I have fought in India against the enemies of my country, all who know me there are ready to give evidence in my favour." We may recapitulate his main charges thus:

- (1) Perron was a traitor, in league with the English from about May 1803 or earlier.
- (2) He could have led over 300,000 men against the English; but

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1. I do not know on what this allegation is based.

instead of concentrating his army he deliberately scattered it to make easy the passage of the English into Hindustan.

(3) He deserted his army and his Prince in their greatest hour of need.

(4) He set avarice above honour, and his motive in all these things was cupidity alone, not even cowardice.

#### 10. The Charges Considered

We thus have two directly opposing versions of Perron's conduct in 1803 : as Bourquin is the villain of Perron's story, so Perron is the villain of Bourquin's. Bearing in mind the conflict between the two versions, there is, however, little dispute as to the facts proper : the divergence lies rather in the interpretation to be put on those facts.

The basic allegation "for the prosecution" is that Perron was a traitor, in league with the English from about May 1803 or earlier. In support of this allegation Bourquin does not adduce any independent external evidence, as for instance, copies of correspondence between Perron and the English : he urges rather that Perron's treachery must irresistibly be inferred from his conduct, and that an independent judge of the facts and surrounding circumstances could come to no other conclusion but that Perron was a traitor. In support of this contention Bourquin points to the alleged vast forces at Perron's disposal : the rapidity with which they could have been brought together to destroy the English; the non-concentration of these vast forces, and the dispersal of those of which Perron did gain control; the bold advance of a comparatively small English Army and its easy victory at Koil; the dissensions at Delhi; and finally Perron's departure to English territory.

In other words, Bourquin's reasoning is *a priori* : knowing the upshot of the events of 1803, he assumes their cause. And in marshalling his case against Perron he falls into the very grave error, for a 'prosecutor', of exaggerating his case. That case rests on circumstantial evidence alone, and if it is to be considered judicially it is only fair that the facts should be accurately stated, any doubt or difference being resolved in favour of the defendant. The danger of circumstantial evidence lies in the possibility of wrong inferences being drawn from the facts. When the facts are accurately established and impartially presented, that danger is a real one and one against which a jury requires to be warned : so much the more dangerous is it, therefore, when the facts themselves are not only impeachable

but have been exaggerated, deliberately or inadvertently, by the prosecution. If that is done, prejudice to the defendant must, perforce, be imported into the case; and a new trial or a reversal of the verdict, will result if he be convicted.

Bourquin's case against Perron, apart from its lack of externally clinching evidence of treachery, is injured by its exaggeration of the following facts. Firstly, it is beyond all question unfair and untrue to estimate that the various Princes would have combined to put at Perron's disposal, for use against the English, 300,000 men; or that even if this had happened, those men could, by any stretch of the imagination, have been described (as Bourquin describes them) as "a disciplined and war-trained army." The princes in question never had combined before: on the contrary, they had for the most part occupied themselves in fighting each other. Even the French adventurers had fought against each other on many occasions during the previous decade. The long-existing state of anarchy in the Mogul dominions always tended towards and had, in fact, resulted in widespread warfare between the various lesser rulers: their allegiance to the Mogul, to Scindia, or to both was usually entirely nominal. They did not and could not combine against the English either then or later. It is the grossest of exaggerations to speak of their hordes of irregulars as a "disciplined and war-trained army"; and it is to be doubted whether their forces, even if they had combined, would have amounted to anything like three hundred thousand men.

Bourquin's allegation that Perron facilitated the construction of an English outpost at Sasni seems to be of little importance. It does not appear that Lake made any use of this outpost in his advance to Koil, and in any case the English already had a cantonment even further forward towards Delhi—at Anupshahr, which Fleury devastated in due course. The accusation that Perron deliberately dispersed his forces instead of concentrating and rallying them requires to be judged in the light of Perron's explanation, fully set forth above, and of the narrative of the siege of Delhi given in Chapter VII. If we exclude from the computation the 300,000 men (who in my opinion hardly existed save in Bourquin's imagination), it would appear that Perron did his best to recall the Fourth Brigade from the Deccan; Scindia could not be expected to part with the First Brigade; and the Second and Third Brigades were already on the Jamna. There can be little doubt that Perron's plan of campaign was well-conceived.



Grandiose some of its clauses certainly were, but this was in the authentic Napoleonic manner; and as far as the regular Brigades—who were Perron's only effective concern—were concerned, Perron seems to have acted throughout consistently with his plan.

There remain two further counts in the indictment : that Perron was disobedient and that he was unconscionably avaricious. It must be admitted that there is a great deal of truth in these, though however true they are they do not make him a traitor. Disobedient and even truculent to Scindia he was, but without seeking to justify such conduct it may be borne in mind that this attitude may have been directed as much or more against Scindia's advisers and courtiers than against the ruler himself. Rightly or wrongly Perron may have determined that in dealing with an Oriental Court his only course was to take up a firm position and stand no nonsense. No doubt he realised that he did this at his own risk and had a full appreciation of its dangers, but to say that a general is overbearing is by no means to accuse him of treachery. This part of Bourquin's case, in fact, merely begs the old question of the relations between soldiers and statesmen, a question which has been raised and discussed over and over again. From the statesman's point of view Perron's actions were undoubtedly wrong: from a general's they may only have been misconceived.

This leaves us to consider the last charge only: that Perron was possessed of an overriding cupidity. In this accusation, considered by itself and not as denoting a motive for treachery, I think Bourquin was correct. Everything points to Perron having been carried away by his great position as de Boigne's successor and virtual Viceroy of Hindustan, and having cast discretion to the winds in his wild strivings to amass more and more wealth before retiring to Europe. He was a man of humble birth who found himself almost a king: *quidquid delirant reges*. ... That he did attain a vast fortune by the time he was fifty is undisputed, and he saved a large enough part of it from the debacle. I am personally inclined to accept the verdict of Major L. F. Smith, one of his officers, who knew him well: "I do not approve of Perron's principles, nor do I admire his character; but impartiality obliges me to declare that I do not think he wanted either sense, prudence or principle in quitting Scindia's service when he did, and seeking protection from the British Government. I condemn him for not advising Scindia to avoid hostilities" and for his

indecision at Koil. "After Perron became commander-in chief in 1797, with more power than any European ever possessed in Hindustan, he arranged and pursued a systematic plan to aggrandise his authority and his riches; he was fortunate in both; from Lahore to Kotah and from Koil to Jodhpur the country obeyed his will and dreaded his frown; and if money can bestow happiness or respect he ought to be venerated and blest, for he possessed above fifty lakhs of rupees."

In my judgment, then, Perron was not a traitor; but loyal to Scindia and to France according to his lights. His overwhelming ambition, his undoubted bravery and his considerable military skill raised him from the lowest situation to the highest; but his avarice proved his partial downfall. His departure from Hindustan in 1803 was justifiable.

## II. Return to France and death

It is not, I think, necessary to relate the rest of his life in any detail. He arrived in France with a substantial fortune in 1806, accompanied by two children—his wife had died in Bengal. He settled on a large estate which he had purchased, married again, maintained a cordial correspondence with de Boigne until the latter's death, and died on 21st May 1834. On his tomb in the cemetery at Authon is the epitaph:

Pierre Francois Cuillier Perron  
Ancien Generalissime des  
Armees de Scindiah  
et du Grand Mogol  
1753-1834

Many of his descendants are amongst the French nobility today.

One incident may be related by way of postscript to the events of 1803. In 1813 or 1814 Bourquin turned up at Perron's chateau and attempted to blackmail him, with an accompaniment of threats alternately of suicide or assassination. He alleged that Perron owed him a large sum of money over some debt of their Indian days. The police were called in and Bourquin was removed; but three years later he renewed his claims. The matter was investigated by the authorities, who came to the conclusion that their interference was not called for; and in the end Bourquin wrote an abject letter to Perron appealing not for money but for mercy.<sup>1</sup>

1. See Martineau, Appendices X and XI.

## APPENDIX I

**General de Boigne**

Benoit le Borgne, *alias* de Boigne, was born at Chambéry in Savoy on 8 March 1751, the son of a hide merchant in that town. The army of Savoy was closed to him, for commissions therein were only given to those of noble birth, so, following an inclination towards the profession of arms which he had since an early age, he crossed into France in 1768 and joined the famous Regiment de Clare of the Irish Brigade as an ensign. With this he served for three years in Flanders and eighteen months in the island of Mauritius returning to France in 1774 with the regiment. De Boigne then resigned his French commission and obtained a captaincy in a Greek corps in the service of Catherine of Russia, who was then engaged in hostilities with the Turks. During an abortive attack on the island of Tenedos he was captured and is said to have been sold as a slave for fifty dollars in Constantinople.

At the end of the war he was redeemed by his parents, and made his way to St. Petersburg, meeting there the Empress Catherine and Lord Macartney, the English ambassador to Russia. He was granted a lieutenant's commission as recompense for his slavery, and sent to a Mediterranean garrison, where he accompanied Lord Percy on a tour through the Greek Islands. From Percy he is said to have received letters of recommendation to important persons in India. The accounts of the early part of his career present some discrepancies; but there seems no doubt that de Boigne found his way to India by Egypt and the Red Sea, arriving at Madras in January 1778. There he was granted an ensign's commission in the Madras Army, and the regiment to which he was posted formed part of the force under the command of Colonel Baillie which was overwhelmed by Hyder Ali in 1780. De Boigne being on detached duty escaped this disaster, but soon afterwards resigned the service. His reason for this action is variously given as disappointment at not receiving an adjutantcy, or as his trial by court-martial (by which he was acquitted) for taking liberties with the wife of a brother-officer.

He left Madras, his original intention apparently being to return overland to Russia; but on arrival at Calcutta he met with much kindness from Warren Hastings, who gave him letters of introduction to the Nawab Wazir of Oudh and the British Resident at Lucknow.

Arriving at the latter city early in 1783, the Nawab received him with ceremony and gave him substantial presents; and he stayed there for five months, enjoying the hospitality of his compatriot Claud Martin, and occupying himself in perfecting his knowledge of the vernacular. We may conclude that it was at this time that he resolved to become a soldier of fortune in Hindustan. Setting out towards Delhi, circumstances brought him into contact with the Rana of Gohad, to whom he offered advice regarding a military operation then in progress; but other European adventurers were already on the spot and de Boigne was forestalled. He then made overtures to the Raja of Jaipur, but Hastings signified his disapproval by ordering the Savoyard to return to Calcutta.

After hearing de Boigne's explanation, the Governor-General permitted him to return to Lucknow; and in 1784 Madhoji Scindia now determined to employ regular troops trained and led by Europeans, invited him to raise two battalions with a complement of artillery. From this modest beginning sprang the magnificent army, which though deserted by most of its officers fought Lake and Wellesley so desperately in 1803.

The two battalions experienced a certain amount of active service not always favourably. In 1788 or the beginning of 1789 de Boigne proposed to Scindia that they should be increased to a force of 10,000 men, but the Maharaja refused, and de Boigne departed for Lucknow, where he set himself up in business, proving successful under Martin's guidance. Early in 1790 Madhoji changed his mind and recalled de Boigne to Agra. A force of ten battalions was raised from a nucleus of old regular units: Agra became its 'base depot': de Boigne received the style of General: and a small army on the European model was soon in being. In the same year it speedily proved its worth at the bloody battles of Patan and Merta in Rajputana: a second Brigade was raised in 1791, and the Third Brigade in 1793. Madhoji died in the following year, and his successor, Daulat Rao, was not of the same calibre. On Christmas Day 1795, de Boigne, having resigned his command and given Daulat Rao the parting advice never to quarrel with the British, left Koil for Europe by way of Lucknow and Calcutta. He reached Deal early in 1797, lived in London for some years, married the former French ambassador's daughter despite the somewhat embarrassing existence (unknown to his bride, it seems) of an Indian consort by whom he had children: and retired in 1803 to

an estate on the outskirts of Chambéry. On the return of the Bourbons, he was made *Marechal de camp* and a knight of the Legion of Honour and of St. Louis. In 1815 he was created a Sardinian count and a lieutenant-general, and received the Grand Cross of St. Maurice and St. Lazarus. He overwhelmed his native town with benefactions, and died full of years and honours at Chambéry on 21 June 1830. He was succeeded in his title by his son by the Muslim consort; and the Fontaine des Elephants erected by grateful fellow-citizens to his memory may yet be seen at the end of the Rue de Boigne in the town where he was born and died.

There are lives of him in French by V. de Saint-Genis (1873) and Maurice Besson (1930), but the former, in particular, contains many inaccuracies; and the best life in English is an article by Sir Evan Cotton C. I. E., in *Bengal : Past & Present* (the Journal of the Calcutta Historical Society), 1927.

## APPENDIX II

### John Beckett

Amongst the most mysterious figures of Scindia's army was a certain John Beckett, whose elusiveness has served to keep his name almost unknown down to the present day. Wide search has been made for any authentic particulars of Beckett; and though many questions remain unanswered, it may be of interest to summarise such information as has emerged.

As has been seen, Perron, by about the third week in August 1803, if not earlier, had dismissed from Scindia's armies all, or nearly all, their officers who were of British blood, leaving his forces to be staffed by a galaxy of French, Dutch, Italian and Portuguese commanders, but to this wholesale dismissal there was one very remarkable exception, John Beckett, who was not only a subject of King George III, but had, it appears, held that sovereign's commission—and may even have still been holding it at this period when he was serving Scindia and the French general. And, moreover, the Englishman Beckett was employed in the most confidential and responsible position imaginable namely, as Private Secretary and personal aide-de-camp to Perron; and he remained in that position throughout the opening stages of the war,

eventually accompanying his master into exile in Bengal.

Who was Beckett? That cannot be stated with certainty; but from a letter—the only letter of his that has been traced—written by him in 1804, it appears that he had held a commission in England, previous to his arrival in India, for he mentions that before coming to the East he had the honour of being presented to the Duke of York — Field-Marshal H. R. H. Prince Frederick Augustus, Duke of York and Albany, Commander-in-Chief of the Army from 1798 to 1809. It seems possible, therefore, that Perron's secretary may be identified with one John Beckett, who is shown in the Army List for 1803 as an Ensign of Invalids on full pay, with date 24 June 1795, of "the Companies late at Guernsey".

Be that as it may, the singular fact remains that in 1803 Perron whilst giving their *conges* to many British officers in less responsible positions, retained their countryman Beckett in a place of the utmost trust and confidence. How can this be explained? One plausible explanation is that Perron himself was a traitor, and had already pledged himself secretly to Wellesley. Borquin, as we have seen, did not hesitate to adopt this view, though since he was Perron's bitterest enemy his statements must be treated with every reserve: he says "Perron's confidential agent in his intrigue was an Englishman named Becket (*sic*). The British Government of India knew about it, and had seen, with pleasure the man who, alone in these countries, was able to check their progress, put himself in a position of dependence on them, by remitting his fortune to British territory and taking an Englishman as his confidential agent and witness of his most secret transactions. This precaution showed the *arriere pensee* in Perron. The English leaders divined this, and it appeared that at this time, after secret negotiations with him, they arranged the plan of invasion, which otherwise would have been absurd. ...

This *may* be the truth of the matter; but since our witness is by no means of unimpeachable credibility the story needs to be treated with considerable reserve. Alternatively, of course, Perron may himself have been loyal to Scindia and to France; and Beckett may have been loyal to his own country of origin but not to his employers. I am inclined to think that Beckett was a British secret agent in the Maratha camp; but I am by no means so sure that Perron was privy to this role of Beckett's. It is known that Wellesley had, for some

time previous to the outbreak of hostilities, been endeavouring to negotiate through certain of Scindia's European officers with a view to bringing pressure on them and their comrades to resign and come over to the British. Beckett's name was, however, never mentioned in this connexion in the published correspondence; which may go to show that his role was even more secret—not merely a sympathiser but a spy.

The trust felt in Beckett by Perron is exemplified by the fact that he employed him as an envoy to carry his proposals to Lake, under the walls of Aligarh on 29 August, 1803. It may be significant that Beckett's identity does not seem to have been fully disclosed even to some staff officers accompanying Lake, for one of them, Lieutenant John Pester, a Quartermaster of Brigade, writes in his diary of "Boukett", which suggests that he was perhaps thought to be a French man with some such name as Bouquet.

On 6th September Perron wrote to Lake that he had quitted Scindia's service, and asked for a passport for Lucknow. Lake received the letter on the 7th; and by the 9th Perron had reached Muttra on his way down country, accompanied by Beckett and his own personal bodyguard as well as a British escort. They reached Lucknow on 1st October. Perron eventually made his way to Calcutta, and thence to Hamburg and France: for some time he lived at Chinsura in the house which later became the Hughli College. During this period of exile Beckett wrote him a long letter, of which I append a translation in view of its interest and of the fact that it has not previously appeared in English :

Chinsura, 17 March, 1804.

My dear Sir,

During the time that I have had the pleasure of living in your family, into which I was admitted in the first place on the public service, and just recently as an intimate, my conduct, I trust, was universally of such a nature as left no one in doubt of my loyalty and of my attachment to your person. At a time when you were surrounded by difficulties and dangers, and deserted by those who ranged their insolence against your goodwill, at the risk of my life I remained constantly at your side, and I would gladly have remained with you to the very end.

For your part, in return, you behaved in such a generous and noble manner towards me that until the end of my life I shall not cease to call down the blessings of Heaven upon the head of him who has so well rewarded what I consider to have been no more than my duty. Conscious as I am of having done nothing save what my duty required, nevertheless the effect of my conduct has been extremely serious by reason of my being an Englishman, and it will perhaps involve me in difficulties which it will be beyond my power ever to surmount.

I do not mention these matters in order to vaunt my own merits, but to convince you that the request which I now submit to you namely, to permit me to consecrate the rest of my life to the service of my country—does not arise from any lessening of my attachment to you, but from an overwhelming duty which is imposed upon me by my own inclinations and my nationality.

Out of the sixteen thousand rupees which you so kindly bestowed upon me, I have purchased for the sum of twelve thousand rupees a cornet's commission in one of the regiments of His Majesty's Light Dragoons. The Commander-in-Chief, General Lake, has power to approve of the appointment provisionally, until the Gazette be finally published and the commission signed by the King of England. But since the Commander-in-Chief in India is extremely prejudiced against me, I have considerable apprehension that he will use every means to oppose my entry into the army, and I am afraid that I shall have to go to England in order to fulfil my desires by means of the personal intervention of the Duke of York, to whom I have had the honour of being presented in days gone by.

I wish, therefore, with your permission to proceed to Calcutta where I shall have an opportunity of making an application to General Lake and the Governor-General, through the medium of friends of mine there. If I should be disappointed in the attempt, I would wish to continue my journey to England without delay.

I have committed all this to paper, firstly, because to a person of feeling there is nothing more painful than to take leave of a well beloved friend and benefactor; and, secondly, because I would wish that this written testimony should remain in your hands as the proof of the sentiments of everlasting regard, of gratitude and of respect, with which your benevolent conduct has inspired me.



Believe me, my dear Sir,  
your ever grateful, sincere and faithful, friend and servant,

John Beckett<sup>1</sup>

This somewhat wordy letter, avowedly written rather for display to others than for Perron's personal enlightenment, shows that the relations between Perron and his aide-de-camp were close and cordial, and that they parted on good terms; but it leaves unanswered most of the questions that puzzle one, and indeed gives rise to more problems. What was the 'public service' in pursuance of which Beckett entered Perron's family (i.e. Staff)? Why should Perron need such a letter as this to display as a proof of Beckett's "sentiments of everlasting regard"?<sup>2</sup> Whatever may be the truth of it all, Beckett seems to have been disappointed in his hopes of obtaining a commission as a cornet of Light Dragoons, since no trace of his having been gazetted to any such appointment can be found in the contemporary Army Lists. It seems probable that he received some sort of a pension at this time, however, from the Government of India.

For a while his movements are again cloaked in mystery. The next we hear of him is in 1812, if (as seems likely) he is to be identified with Captain Beckett, "an English gentleman of high character and attainments", who at Hyderabad in that year was appointed to the command of a regiment of infantry newly raised by Raja Chandu Lal; and who in 1813 succeeded to the command of the new force raised at the Nizam's expense by Henry Russell, the British Resident, and named after him the Russell Brigade. The infantry portion of this brigade still exists, being now designated the 1st and 10th Battalions (Russell's) of the 19th Hyderabad Regiment, Indian Army. Beckett soon found cause to disagree with Russell. On the first occasion his apology was accepted; the second time, in April 1814, his services were dispensed with.

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1. *Martineau*, Appendix IX.

2. The reference to 'public service' may, of course, mean that Perron, in pursuance of a secret arrangement with the British, appointed Beckett to his staff; and Perron may have wished to display the letter in order to persuade the English to give him more liberty in Bengal, or to allow him to leave for Europe. This would make Perron the traitor that Bourquin maintained he was, but if he had been secretly in league with the British they would know it without his having to display Beckett's letter to them.

Whether this Beckett was Perron's former secretary is not absolutely certain; but it is not long before we find definite mention of Captain John Beckett, late of the Maratha service, for he appears in a Calcutta Directory of 1816<sup>3</sup> as receiving a pension from the British. This pension, like others was probably granted about 1804. Our next clue to his movements has a pathos of its own. Beneath a banyan tree at the foot of Pir Pahar hill, two or three miles from Monghyr on the Ganges' bank, are three crumbling masonry tombs. Two bear no name; the epitaph on the third has long been renowned for its eloquent simplicity:—

*Be still - - she sleeps*

MARY ANN BECKETT  
19th July 1832

Local tradition has it that this is the grave of a young girl killed by a fall from her horse, daughter by a Kashari mother of the occupant of Pir Pahar House, a handsome bungalow on the summit of the hill which overlooks her tomb and the river running past it. The name of that occupant was John Beckett, late of the Maratha service, whose rank is variously given as Captain, Colonel or General. He may positively be connected with the British secret agent of 1803 by an entry in the pension lists of 1840, which shows that he was then living at Monghyr and receiving a pension of a hundred and twenty rupees a month.<sup>4</sup>

In the *Indian News* in 1841<sup>5</sup> there appeared an obituary notice of one John Beckett, who had died at Portoferraio in the Isle of Elba in that April. This periodical, in common with others of a similar nature, took considerable trouble to collect notices of births, deaths and marriages of Anglo-Indian interest from all over the world; and it seems very likely that John Beckett of Elba was the same as his name-sake of far-off Monghyr. With the kindly assistance of British consular officials and residents in Leghorn and Italy, I made inquiries some time since in the hope of finding Beckett's grave at Portoferraio,

3. Gardener's *Original Calcutta Directory*, 1816. He would hardly have received a British pension, even after such a lapse of time, if he had deliberately ignored Wellesley's proclamation.

4. *Bengal and Agra Annual Guide and Gazetteer*, 1841.

5. Vol. 1, No. 1,5. p. 350.

or some entry of his burial in the local registers; but the results have been entirely negative. John Beckett remains as mysterious in his death as in his life; though somewhere, perhaps, may lie the papers which tell the full story of his business in Scindia's camp.

### APPENDIX III

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## Mission of Yusuf Ali Khan to the court of Ranjit Singh, 1800

DR. BIRENDRA VARMA\*

The fear of Afghan domination loomed large on the political horizon of India during the last decade of the 18th century. Zaman Shah, the ruler of Afghanistan, who intended to revive the past glory and splendour of the House of Timur seriously threatened to invade India in consequence of which the English were compelled to keep a close watch over the activities of the Sikhs in their relation with the Afghans. They contemplated to open negotiations with the greatest and most powerful Sikh chief of the Panjab, Ranjit Singh, under whose banner some of the Sikh chiefs rallied their strength in times of great emergencies. Thus the increasing power of Ranjit Singh and the continual reports of the diplomatic moves of Zaman Shah to attach Ranjit Singh to his cause greatly alarmed Wellesley, the English Governor-General, who lost no time in cautioning the English Residents in the courts of Nawab Wazir of Oudh, Peshwa and Daulat Rao Sindhia to watch the fluctuating political situation in the North-West Frontier and asked them to transmit authentic informations regarding the movements and attempts of Zaman Shah to win over the Sikhs.

Such was the background of the beginning of a brisk and hectic exchange of correspondence between the cis-Sutlej Sikh chiefs and English Residents over the question of forming a system of mutual cooperation in the event of Zaman Shah's advance towards India.<sup>1</sup> Roy Singh, a Sikh chief of the cis-Sutlej state and Jassa Singh, another Sikh chief most probably of the Ramgarhia Misl, both of them pleaded for immediate friendly alliance with the English for warding off the Afghan menace, but Wellesley concurring with the views of General Craig discarded such a proposition of mutual co-operation as an impracticable idea from the point of view of sound strategic reasons.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Sinha, N.K., *Rise of the Sikh Power*, p. 189.

2. *Ibid.*

Wellesley thought it more desirable to establish some channel of communication forthwith for receiving early authentic information regarding the political developments in the Panjab and Afghanistan. He instructed Resident Lumsden to take prompt action in this direction.<sup>3</sup> Lumsden instructed his news-writer at Patiala, Ghanshyam Das, to send news-writers to Kabul, Peshawar, Gujrat and even to Zaman Shah's camp for transmitting intelligences of that quarter to the English authorities.<sup>4</sup> The news transmitted by them enabled Wellesley to know the relative strength and disposition of the forces of the principal Sikh chiefs of the North-West Frontier as well as a just idea of the opposition that Zaman Shah was likely to encounter in the realisation of his long projected invasion of India in order to rescue the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II from the hands of the English and Marathas as well.<sup>5</sup>

The Sikhs leapt into prominence in the records of the English Company when Zaman Shah led his fourth Indian invasion in 1798. The English authorities at Calcutta were informed in December 1798 that Ranjit Singh had "assembled ten to twelve thousand horse. He and many other Sirdars were attempting to hem in the army of the invader and grain was selling in Zaman Shah's camp at three seers a rupee"<sup>6</sup> Ranjit Singh was keen-eyed enough to exploit the situation created by the recurring attempts of the Afghans to pass through the Panjab in order to reach Delhi. He was looked upon by the English as the leader of the Sikh chiefs who, unlike their Indian counterparts, never regarded the court of Kabul as the highest tribunal of India.<sup>7</sup> Ranjit Singh became so much prominent that Zaman Shah considered it essential to conciliate him before he again ventured to advance towards India. Some of Zaman Shah's counsellors advised him to march into India through the route of Bhawalpur in order to bypass the obstruction of the Sikhs.<sup>8</sup> But Zaman Shah was determined to follow the Lahore route, and offered Khilats to those Sikh chiefs who readily responded to his friendly gestures.<sup>9</sup> He honoured three principal Sikh

3. Political Procs., 29 Oct. 1798, No. 12, p. 10420

4. *Ibid.*, p. 10422-23.

5. Secret Consultations, 14 December, 1798, No. 9.

6. *Poona Residency Correspondence* (P.R.C.), Vol. VIII, No. 98.

7. Madge, W.C., *Ranjit Singh, the Lion of the North*, 'Calcutta Review', 1891, p. 385.

8. Secret Procs., 14 December, 1798, No. 6.

9. *Ibid.*

chiefs with Khilats, treated them with marked favour and distinction, and instructed them to invite other Sikh leaders to "follow their example of submission."<sup>10</sup> He also endeavoured to conciliate the Sikh Zamindars who possessed lands adjacent to Lahore, and treated with kindness and liberality all Sikhs who attended his court for the purpose of acknowledging his authority.<sup>11</sup> All these manoeuvres of Zaman Shah to appease the Sikhs were made known to the English authorities who considered every move of Zaman Shah to be a serious threat to the peace and tranquility of the British possessions in India.

The favourable disposition of Zaman Shah towards the Sikhs in general afforded Ranjit Singh an opportunity to bargain with him and he asked the Afghan monarch to grant him the city of Lahore.<sup>12</sup> Zaman Shah did not react favourably to his proposal and so Ranjit Singh told him that if he would put him in charge of the fort of Lahore, he would pay one lakh rupees by way of Nazrana.<sup>13</sup> Zaman Shah did not reply probably because he was busy in making preparations for his speedy retreat from the Panjab on account of the sudden revolt of his half-brother Mahmud.<sup>14</sup> It was also probable that his precipitate retreat was due to his futile attempts to accommodate matters with the Sikhs who obstructed all his efforts to secure an unmolested passage through the Panjab.<sup>15</sup> The conjecture that the Sikhs purchased Zaman Shah's return either by pecuniary sacrifices<sup>16</sup> or by bribing his Wazir Wafadar Khan<sup>17</sup> is a matter of doubtful speculation.

While Zaman Shah was retreating from the Panjab, he lost greater part of his artillery by the sudden rising of the river Jhelum.<sup>18</sup> He lost twelve<sup>19</sup> or fifteen<sup>20</sup> pieces of big guns. He wrote to Ranjit Singh 'requesting him to extricate those guns from the bed of the

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- 10. Secret Consultations, 4 Jan., 1799, No. 20.
  - 11. Secret Procs., 4 Jan., 1799, No. 33.
  - 12. Foreign Miscellaneous, No. 206, pp. 55-56.
  - 13. Political Procs., 25 January, 1799, No. 24, p. 616.
  - 14. Pol. Consultations, 25 January, 1799, No. 25.
  - 15. Secret Procs., 4 January, 1799, No. 27.  
Secret Consultations, 14 Jan., 1799, No. 7.
  - 16. Pol. Procs., 25 January, 1799, No. 28, p. 629.
  - 17. Pol. Consultations, 25 January, 1799, No. 25.
  - 18. Secret Procs., 25 March, 1799, No. 13.
  - 19. Foreign Miscellaneous, No. 206, p. 55.
  - 20. Secret Procs., 25 May, 1800, No. 54.

river and despatch them to his court at Kabul.<sup>21</sup> This provided fresh opportunity to exact favour from the Afghan monarch, and so Ranjit Singh got some of those guns dug out from the bed of the river and forwarded them to Kabul.<sup>22</sup> By this time Zaman Shah had already settled matters with Mahmud Shah and was seriously making preparations for another invasion of India. He was very much pleased by the gesture of goodwill shown by Ranjit Singh in sending the guns to Kabul. He rewarded Ranjit Singh by granting him the city of Lahore<sup>23</sup> and sent to him a rich Khilat thereby recognising his predominant position in the Panjab.<sup>24</sup>

The establishment of cordial relationship between Ranjit Singh and Zaman Shah had a tremendous effect in moulding the subsequent policy of the English towards the Sikhs. The English authorities apprehended that if Zaman Shah were successful in winning over to his side the powerful Sikh chief Ranjit Singh, he would easily advance towards the frontier of Oudh and in that case all the Muslim powers—Mughals, Nawab of Oudh, Rohillas, the disaffected and disgruntled chiefs like Wazir Ali and Shamsudoullah—would join him in forming a powerful league against the English.<sup>25</sup> The English also apprehended that after conciliating Ranjit Singh, the next attempt of Zaman Shah on Hindustan "might not terminate so disgracefully as the last since this chief possessed considerable power as well as influence in the Panjab and seemed ambitious of acquiring still greater authority by means of close connection with the Shah."<sup>26</sup> Ranjit Singh declared himself as the chief of Lahore and assumed a menacing attitude towards those Sikh chiefs who intended to oppose the Afghans.<sup>27</sup> In such circumstances Wellsley disapproved Collin's idea of uniting the Sikh chiefs in a confederacy for the purpose of opposing the "unjustifiable designs of both these chieftains."<sup>28</sup> Instead, he took defensive measures and decided to despatch a native agent to the court of Ranjit Singh with suitable instructions for "impressing that chief with a

21. Foreign Miscellaneous, No. 206, p. 56.

22. *Ibid.*

23. Mason, *Narrative of the Various Journeys in Baluchistan, Afghanistan and the Punjab from 1826 to 1838*, London 1842, p. 428.

24. Sinha, N.K., *Ranjit Singh*, p. 11.

25. Varma, B., *English East India Company and the Afghans*, p. 137.

26. Secret Procs., 24 April 1800, No. 73.

27. *Ibid.*, 26 June 1800, No. 59.

28. *Ibid.*, 16 October 1800, No. 26.

just sense of the danger to which he would expose the interests of himself and of his nation by yielding to the insidious proposals of Zaman Shah."<sup>29</sup>

Wellesley instructed Collins to select a person who would be profitably entrusted with the said mission.<sup>30</sup> Collins promptly secured the services of Mir Bengali who was at that time at Kanauj and who promised to repair to his presence for proper credentials.<sup>31</sup> But Mir Bengali later expressed inability to undertake the journey on account of his bad health.<sup>32</sup> So Collins, in anticipation of the approval of the Governor-General, engaged Yusuf Ali Khan in whose ability, zeal and experience he was sanguine in his expectations.<sup>33</sup> Collins furnished Yusuf Ali Khan with letters of introduction to all the principal Sikh chiefs of the Panjab and asked Rour Mull, a Sikh vakil of respectable character and considerable influence to accompany him.<sup>34</sup>

Yusuf Ali Khan was informed that Zaman Shah entertained views of his predecessors, Ahmad Shah and Timur Shah Durrani, both of whom had indulged in "an indiscriminate plunder of friends as well as foes by sacking the most opulent cities and by enslaving the inoffensive inhabitants whom they treated as beasts of burden."<sup>35</sup> Zaman Shah's motives would be carried into effect if he could subjugate the Sikh nation and so Ranjit Singh must be warned about the 'unwarrantable designs' of Zaman Shah who could only be defeated by the superior power and influence of Ranjit Singh in the Panjab.<sup>36</sup> Ranjit Singh was also to be convinced that as soon as Zaman Shah had acquired a solid footing in the Panjab, motives of policy would induce him "to embrace the earliest occasion of sacrificing Ranjit Singh whose courage, ambition and power could not fail of exciting the constant dread and jealousy of that tyrant."<sup>37</sup> If Ranjit Singh accepted the proposal of Zaman Shah, it would lower his position in the eyes of all the Sikh chiefs who regarded him as protector of the Sikh nation in India. Yusuf Ali Khan was asked to explain to Ranjit Singh that the military force of the English was "with respect to numbers, equipment and discipline so very superior to any army Zaman Shah could

29. Secret Consultations, 24 April, 1800, No. 74.

30. *Ibid.*

31. *Ibid.*, 22 May 1800, No. 55.

32. Secret Procs., 16 October 1800, No. 4.

33. *Ibid.*

34. *Ibid.*

35. Secret Consultations, 16 October, 1800, No. 5.

36. *Ibid.*

37. *Ibid.*



command that should he be so rash or ill-advised as to approach the frontier of our ally he would inevitably share the fate of the late Tipoo Sultaun."<sup>38</sup>

With such instructions Yusuf Ali Khan left for Lahore to meet Ranjit Singh. On the way he met some of the Sikh chiefs of the Panjab and learnt that Ranjit Singh's 'usurpation of Lahore'<sup>39</sup> was disliked by many other Sikh chiefs. Yusuf Ali Khan met Dal Singh, Wazir of Ranjit Singh, who was well disposed towards Zaman Shah. Dal Singh sent to Zaman Shah a few pieces of cannon as a token of his submission. He was chiefly instrumental in prevailing upon his master successfully not to give up Zaman Shah's friendship in view of the growing opposition of the Sikh leaders including Ranjit's own tribe. He also informed Zaman Shah that his master had acknowledged his sovereignty.<sup>40</sup> Thereupon Zaman Shah despatched his wakil Hari Singh with a Khilat to the presence of Ranjit Singh signifying his pleasure in "witnessing your sincerity and attachment as it contains professions of fidelity."<sup>41</sup> Hari Singh delivered to Ranjit Singh a written agreement on behalf of Zaman Shah stating therein that Ranjit Singh could govern Lahore as long as he remained loyal towards the Afghans.<sup>42</sup> This was confirmed by Ram Dayal, Munshi of the court of Ranjit Singh, when Yusuf Ali Khan met him. Ram Dayal also told him the real state of transactions that passed between Ranjit Singh and Zaman Shah on this score,<sup>43</sup> as well as the extent of influence exercised by Dal Singh over the person and policy of Ranjit Singh.<sup>44</sup>

On 22 October, 1800, Yusuf Ali Khan met Ranjit Singh who disclosed to him that he had no faith in the Durrani and it was only to maintain formal appearance of fidelity that he had sent vakils to the Shah's presence.<sup>45</sup> He also recounted how Sardar Futteh Singh took initiative in forming a league of pro-Afghan Sikh chiefs in the Panjab, and this accounted for the adoption of the policy of appeasement by Zaman Shah, who abstained from violating any of his engagements with the Sikhs.<sup>46</sup> Yusuf Ali Khan was further informed that Zaman Shah still entertained designs of invading India and had

38. *Ibid.* 39. Secret Procs., 16 October 1800, No. 20.

40. *Ibid.* 41. Secret Consultations, 30 December 1800, No. 85.

42. Secret Procs., 30 December, 1800, No. 87.

43. *Ibid.*, 30 December, 1800, No. 90

44. *Ibid.*, No. 89.

45. *Ibid.*, No. 79.

46. *ibid.*

sought Ranjit Singh's help in his Indian expeditions.<sup>47</sup> But Ranjit Singh had his own plans and so he always regarded Zaman Shah "an enemy to the lives and property of both your [English] government and mine and meditates the ruin of both states."<sup>48</sup> He relied upon his strength and the strength of his nation, for he believed that Zaman Shah could be opposed successfully only with the help of "a powerful army, enormous resources and well garrisoned fortrresses."<sup>49</sup> But Ranjit Singh did not declare himself as an ally of the English. Probably the reason was that the threatened invasion of Zaman Shah could not materialise on account of the approach of Mahmud Shah towards Kabul by rapid marches.<sup>50</sup> There was a general belief at Lahore that there would soon be a decisive battle between Mahmud Shah and Zaman Shah.<sup>51</sup> Ranjit Singh recalled his agent from the court of Kabul when he learnt of the capture of Kandahar by the victorious army of Mahmud Shah.<sup>52</sup>

Yusuf Ali Khan's mission could achieve little because nothing tangible resulted from his negotiations with Ranjit Singh. Yusuf Ali Khan did not have the authority to conclude a treaty on behalf of company's government and so his efforts were confined only to impressing upon the Sikh chief the gravity of the situation and the necessity of a concerted action to thwart the designs of Zaman Shah. Throughout the negotiations Yusuf Ali Khan could discover the distrust which the Sikh chief nourished against the Afghans whose repeated onslaughts had created difficulties in the establishment of the Sikh nation in the Panjab. Ranjit Singh was shrewd enough to realise the diplomatic move of the English and so he carefully avoided any entanglement either with the English or the Afghans. But after Zaman Shah's retreat from Peshawar the possibility of an Afghan invasion was removed and Yusuf Ali was recalled in March 1801.<sup>53</sup>

[Note—For a more detailed and intensive study of the subject, the inquisitive reader is also referred to the contemporary works like the *Umdat-u-Tawarikh* by Sohan Lal Suri, the *Tarikh-i-Panjab* by Ghulam Muhy-ud-Din *alias* Bute Shah, etc.—Ed.]

47. *Ibid.*, No. 95.

48. *Ibid.*

49. *Ibid.*

50. Secret Consultations, 19 March, 1801, No. 49.

51. *Ibid.*

52. *Ibid.*, No. 48.

53. Pol. Consultations, 11 March, 1802, No. 1 (Letter of Ranjit Singh received on 23 June, 1801), P.R.C. Vol. IX, No. 246.

## The Ballad of Ram Singh's Two Rebellions\*

This ballad has been recorded with historical and geographical notes by Mr. J. F. Mitchell, Assistant Commissioner, Kulu, and the text and translation edited by the Rev. T. Grahame Bailey of Wazirabad. Mr. C.H. Donald has supplied the following note on the origin of another version of the ballad :—

“The Ram Singh Ballad was sung to me by three old ‘Abdals’ of Nurpur, in the Kangra district. One of them, a very old man, informed me that he was then a child, but well remembers the British forces coming into the valley, and his father and two of his uncles were ordered to compose and sing a ballad of the whole proceedings. The names of the three composers are :—

1. Jatt, 2. Dhaman, 3. Billu,—Abdals of Nurpur.

The ballad, so far as they know, or I can discover, was never written down, so no manuscript copy of it appears to be in existence now.

There appear to be several versions of it, as at present sung, to suit the audience, and it is possible that there is more of it (the original), but this is all I have been able to procure.

The ‘Abdals’ were very loath to give this version, chiefly I think on account of the last line but one of the first verse :—

‘Thar thar kambea Baran Sahib, Raja.’

It is said to have been composed very shortly after Ram Singh fell into the hands of the British and at the instance of the British officers, but I think it is much more likely to have been composed at the instance of the Raja of Nurpur, or some of the leading Rajputs of the time.”

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\**Journal of Punjab Historical Society*, Lahore. Vol. VIII-1 (1920), pp. 1-9.

General Note—I have been unable to discover more detail of the two actions against Ram Singh than are contained in the attached extracts from Barnes’ *Settlement Report* and Burton’s *Sikh Wars*. The ballad consists of four parts, the first, describing the first rebellion and the fight at Jachh; the second, describing the preliminary negotiations, but irrelevantly referring to the Dalla mountain, the scene of the second rebellion. The third reverts to the fighting at Jachh, the subsequent scattering and re-

[Contd. on page 75]

*THE JACHH AND DALLA ACTIONS*

Ram Singh was born in the house of Shama, born in the likeness of God and named 'The Bold.'<sup>1</sup>

He it was who saved the Rajputs' honour. Well did the son of the Wazir fight.

The company wrote and sent an order "Do not interfere with the pale-faced soldiers."

5 The Feringhi is a great scourge, he will put you in a cage.  
Well did the son of the Wazir fight.

Ram Singh wrote and sent this order 'I will fight with the pale-faced soldiers.'

All alone well did the Pathanea fight.

The armies came up from far Calcutta.

10 The Wazir came up by way of Basa, the Sahib as far as Suriali.<sup>2</sup>

In Jachh was the battle joined, all alone well did the Pathanea fight. Bathed and washed the Raja sits at his prayers, the Brahmans betrayed him and caused his capture whilst at prayers.<sup>3</sup>

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*Contd. from page 74]*

assembling at Shahpur (between the the Ravi and the Chakki, now in the Gurdaspur District, but formerly part of the Nurpur tract when the Jullundur Doab was ceded). The fourth, a description of the last fight on the Dalla heights above Shahpur.

1. Ram Singh was the son of Shama, Wazir to the Raja of Nurpur.
2. Inset is a sketch of the scene at the Jachh fight. Suriali or Saliali, however, lies about eight miles to the north; it is difficult to understand the reference to that place. Ram Singh and that part of the British force which was under Major Fisher had come from Shahpur and an easy road for the forces would have been via Danera and thence along the Dancera-Nurpur road which passes through Saliali. The actual fight took place on the ridge between the Bod Nala and the Gareli Khad. Both the end of this ridge and the level land near the Bod, the Gareli and the Jabbar, lie in the village of Jachh. The village of Basa lies S. E. of Jachh running from the top of the ridge down to the Gareli; it is known in the revenue records as Basa Hadialan but is known locally as Basa Waziran; it is now owned by a family of Pathanias all of whom claim descent from Ram Singh.
3. I cannot trace this reference which is repeated several times to the perfidy of Ram Singh's Brahmans, nor do I know if Ram Singh was captured at the Dalla battle; he was transported in the following February but this was after conclusion of hostilities in the Second Sikh War. Probably the ballad is correct in saying he was captured at Dalla.

15 Well did the son of the Wazir fight.

The drums rolled on the heights of Dalla, the regimental tambourines rattled, O people.<sup>4</sup>

All alone well did the Pathanea fight.

The Company wrote and sent an order, 20 "Do not interfere with the pale-faced soldiers", Raja,

The Feringhi is a great scourge, he will put you in a cage, he will put your house to auction.

Will did the son of the Wazir fight.

Ram Singh wrote and sent an order, 25" I will fight with the Feringhi, I have a claim against the English, my life is a thing of but four days."

Well did the son of the Wazir fight.

He wrote an order to his mother's brothers. 30 He called Jawahar Singh and Bahadar Singh his mother's brothers.

He called the Kotwal<sup>5</sup> named Das, he called Dhian the Jaryal. Called he also Amar Singh Manhas who bared his sword (and said) I will try against the armies how my sword works.

35 Then did Ram Singh backing out go up, in his hand seized his sword which says "kill, kill."

"I will try my strength against armies."

All alone well did the Pathanea fight.

40 Bathed and washed the Raja sits at his prayers, then did the Brahmans betray him and in secret cause his capture.

Ram Singh was born in the house of Shama, born in the likeness of God.

45 At birth he seized a sword, he made firm (in his heart) a claim against the English. He wrote an order and sent it to Bhol (Note:—Das was the Kotwal of the Bhol taluqa). He called Das the Kotwal.

Called he also Jangi, Padhwal,<sup>6</sup> 50 and Tara Singh Sahab.

4. Dalle di Dhar : a ridge above Shahpur.

5. Kotwals corresponded to Zaildars. Das is well remembered as the Kotwal of the Dhar Dhol Taluqa lying just S.W. of the scene of the Jachh fight. Bhol is a village in it. The ridge on which the fight took place is the last of the long Dhar Bhol ridge which runs far to the S.W. into Dera tehsil.

6. Bhadwal or Padhwal, Dhanotia, Manhas, are all tribes of Rajputs.

Called Nahangi, the Dhanotia, the Dhanotia refused (to come).  
He called Amar Singh, the Manhas, whose horses wear  
chaplets on their necks.

- 55 Amar Singh bared his sword. Come, let us meet the English.  
The honour of the brotherhood of the faith must be saved, he  
destroyed four regiments, the streams flow with blood.
- 60 Now he moved his camp, and pitched it in Naga Bari,<sup>7</sup>  
There he appointed a Brahman for his food. He ate his  
food and girded his clothes around his waist, the young man.  
He said "Wazir, now get you gone anywhere,
- 65 Take away some small reward from me."  
He bared his sword from his waist.
- 70 He gave orders to his soldiers, and brought his camp to Shah-  
pur. There he gave orders to his soldiers, loot this city of  
Shahpur The drums roll on the height of Dalla, the side-  
drums beat Kumhan.<sup>8</sup>  
The news of you has reached the presence.
- 75 Malmal Sahib has come up, raising the outcry as he comes.<sup>9</sup>  
He shot an arrow into the hand of Malmal Sahib, and the  
hand he destroyed.  
Malmal's brother Candi Sahib has also come up, 80 as he  
come he gave a blow; he warded off the blow with his shield  
and struck his own blow in on the Sahib's head.  
They had his body taken to Delhi.
- 85 The Feringhees are great kings, they wrote an order, and  
asked, The English are great Kings, they sell our homes by  
auction.  
They will not let people go alive.
- 90 Amar Singh said I have but four days to live.  
The Generals and Colonels have come.  
In their coming they published by beat of drum.

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7. Naga Bari lies four miles due west of Jachh. It is on the Nurpur-Pathankot road; it is part of a village still belonging to the Raja of Nurpur.

8. I have not traced Kumhan. It is evidently a place-name, probably refers to a hill on the Dalla heights.

9. Malmal Sahib and Candi Sahib are interesting. The Ballad says that the latter was killed and the former wounded. Barnes says that both Peel and Christie were killed. Burton says that Christie was killed and Peel wounded. Could Malmal be Peel and Candi be Christie?

- Cause Ram Singh to be captured, a reward of two thousand rupees to whoever causes Ram Singh to be captured.
- 95 Your Brahmans have been deceitful, they enabled the capture when he was seated at prayers.  
They put him in a palanquin, and came to Nurpur city.  
The Wazir sat down at the tank of Bala.<sup>10</sup>
- 100 A messenger came running,  
Oh Shama, your city is put in danger.  
You tried your strength against kings,  
The English are great kings,  
Who place in cages."
- 105 As my fate was written so I have received.  
My Missar (Brahman adviser) deceived me.  
My brother Gopal Singh came to meet me,  
My own true brother deceived me.  
The brotherhood give me their assistance.
- 110 Who takes my name while I live ?  
The word of men remains with men (till death),  
Mothers' sons fight.
- 113 Ram Singh, the Pathanea, fought with strength.

## ORIGINAL TEXT

- Ghar Siame de Ram Singh Jamma  
Jamma bara autari jis da nam rakkhea arjang.  
Jin rakkhi Rajputa di laj, baita wazir da khub larea.  
Likh parwane Kaumpani bhejdi: Gorea nal na cher,
- 5 Farangi Hai bari bala, taiki rakhgi pinjrai pai,  
Baiata Wazir da khub larea.  
Likh parwane Ram Singh bhejda mai larna Gorea nal.  
Akaila Pathanea khub larea.  
Dur Kalkatte deia foja carhia.
- 10 Base da carhea wazir Sureali tai carhea Sahab,  
Jachh wich pai gai larai  
Akaila Pathanea khub larea.  
Nahai dhoi Raja puja par behnda, Brahmane cugli lai,  
Puja par ditta pakrai.

10. It is not clear if the British brought him to Bale da Tala as a captive, or whether his friends conveyed him there secretly. For *Tala*, tank, we might read *ateala*, masonry platform round foot of peepul tree. There is one in Nurpur.

15 Baita wazir da khub larea.

. . .

Dalle dia Dhara Dafle bajjde,

Paltni kharke tambur loko,

Akaila Pathanea khub larea,

Likh parwanea Kaumpani bhejdi

20 Gorea nal na cher Raja,

Farangi hai buri bala, taiki rakhga pinjre pai,

tera ghar bar karga nilam,

Baita wazir da khub larea.

Likh parwanea Ram Singh bhejda,

25 Mai larna Farangi nal,

Maira daiya Angrezade nal,

Mai jina diharea car,

Baita wazir da khub larea

Likh parwanea mammea jo bhejda.

30 Saddea Jawahar Singh mamma, Saddea Bahadar Singh mamma,

Saddea Das Kotwal, saddea Dhian Jaryal,

Saddea Amar Singh Manhas, jinne sutri lai talwar,

Mai parkhni foja de nal,

Mairi kaisi caldi talwar.

35 Khai<sup>11</sup> morora phir Ram Singh carhea,

Hath pakri talwar.

Jehri kardi hai maro-o-mar,

Mai parkhni hai foja de nal.

Akaila Pathanea khub larea.

40 Nahai dhoi Raja puja par behnda,

Phir Bahmane cugli lai,

Phir corea ditta pakrai.

. . .

Ghar Siame de Ram Singh Jammea,

Jammea bara autari Raja,

45 Jammde ne pakri talwar Raja,

Daiya baddha Angreza de nal Raja,

Likhi parwanea Bhuli ki bhejea,

Saddea Das Kotwal Raja.

Saddea Jangi Padhwal Raja.

50 Saddea Tara Singh Sahabe nu Raja.

11. Morara Khana, to go back on a thing, to back out. This gives doubtful sense.



- Saddea Nahangi Dhanotia Raja,  
Dhanotie ne likkhea jawab Raja,  
Saddea Amar Singh Manhas Raja,  
Jis de ghorea de gal har Raja,
- 55 Amar Singh sutri lai hai talwar Raja,  
Calo milie Angreza de nal Raja,  
Rakkhni Dharmcare di an Raja.  
Paltna maria car Raja,  
Lahua de bagde nal Raja.
- 60 Hun dera kuc karaya Raja,  
Dera Naga Bari paea Raja,  
Otthe Bahman rasoi ki laya Raja,  
Khali raso kas kapre dhaka par jua Raja,  
Wazir, tu hun kutayo ja Raja.
- 65 Meto thora dea lai jao inam Raja,  
Lakko sutri lai talwar Raja,  
Us bannhi lai dhaka te jua Raja,  
Otthe sapahia ki hukam karaya Raja,  
Dera Shahpure de andar aya Raja.
- 70 Otthe sapahia ki hukam karaya Raja,  
Lutti lo Shahpure da shehr Raja.  
Dallai dia dhara dafle bajjde,  
Kumhani kharke tumbur Raja,  
Teri khabar gai hazur Raja.
- 75 Malmal Sahab carhi aya,  
Aunde a halla karaya Raja,  
Malmal Sahab de hatthe ki tir laya,  
Hatthe da kita nash Raja.  
Malmal da bhai Candi Sahab carhi aya.
- 80 Us aunde a ne phat calaya Raja,  
Phat dhale par bacaya Raja.  
Phat Sahab de sir par bahea Raja,  
Ohda deh Dehli cukaya Raja,  
Daikari dhala da arikka hare de nal arkaya Raja.
- 85 Farangi hai bara badshah, Raja,  
Likhi par wanea pucchea Raja,  
Angrez hai bara badshah Raja,  
Ghar bar karanda nilam Raja,

- Jindea nehi dinda jan Raja.
- 90 Amar Singh akhda mai jina diharee car Raja,  
Jarnail karnail carhi aya Raja,  
Aunde dhandhora pataya Raja,  
Ram Singh deo pakrai Raja,  
Do hazar rupee inam jo Ram Singh de pakrai Raja.
- 95 Tere Bahmane daga kamaya Raja,  
Puja baithda pakaraya Raja,  
Bich sukh pale de paya Raja,  
Nurpur Shehr ki aya Raja,  
Bale de tala par bathea wazir, Raja.
- 100 Ik dorda harkara cala aya Raja,  
Siamea tera shehr arahi bich paya Raja,  
Badshaha kanne tu zora laya.  
Angrez hai bara badshah Raja,  
Jehra rakhda pinjre pai Raja.
- 105 Karm likhea so mai paya Raja,  
Mere Missrai ne daga kamaya Raja,  
Bhai Gopal Singh milne ki aya Raja.  
Sakke bhai ne daga kamaya Raja.  
Bhaicara dinda maddat Raja.
- 110 Jinda lainda kon mera na Raja,  
Marda de bol rehnde marda nal Raja,  
Larde maia de puttara Raja.
- 113 Ram Singh Pathanea zor larea.

...  
**Barnes's 'Settlement Report', Para. 89 :—**

At the end of August 1848 Ram Singh, a Pathania Rajput, and son of the Wazir of the ex-Raja of Nurpur, collecting a band of adventurers from the neighbouring hills of Jummoo, suddenly crossed the Ravi and threw himself into the unoccupied fort of Shahpur. (Note :— This is the Shahpur now in Gurdaspur District). That night he received a congratulatory deputation from the neighbourhood, and proclaimed by beat of drum, that the English rule had ceased. Dalip Singh was the Paramount Power, Jaswan Singh (the son of Raj Bir Singh) the Raja of Nurpur, and Ram Singh his wazir.

...  
**Barnes's 'Settlement Report', Para. 98 :—**

In January 1849, Ram Singh persuaded Raja Sher Singh to give

him two Sikh regiments, each 500 strong, to make a second irruption in the hills. He took up a final position upon the Dula heights. This ridge overhangs the Ravi, and presents towards the plains, the quarter from which an assailing force must proceed, a series of perpendicular blocks of sandstone, varying from 50 to 150 feet high, and each forming in itself a strong and almost impregnable position. The strength of the ground and the disciplined valour of the insurgents made the assault a service of peculiar danger, and Brigadier Wheeler came up in person accompanied by a strong force of all arms. By his skilful dispositions the rebels were driven from their fastnesses with considerable slaughter, and we on our side had to mourn the loss of two gallant officers, Cornet Christie, of the 7th Cavalry, and Lieutenant J. Peel, of the Hoshiarpur Local Corps.

**Burton's 'First and Second Sikh Wars', Chapter XII :—**

...Ram Singh, son of Shama, one of the hereditary wazirs of Nurpur, crossed the frontier and attacked several posts on the customs line in the vicinity of Pathankot and Nurpur. A force of the 15th Irregular Cavalry and 29th Native Infantry under Major Fisher was accordingly sent against him and crossed the Beas at Katgarh [in extreme S. W. of Nurpur tehsil, L. M.] on the 9th September [1848]. Early, on the 10th, Major Fisher marched to Pathankot, where arrangements were made for attacking the rebels who were reported to be in possession of the neighbouring fort of Shahpur. As the force approached that place a body of men was seen on the hill overlooking the fort; these were charged and dispersed by the cavalry. When the party neared the fort, a heavy fire of musketry was opened from the walls, by which a few sowars were wounded. Fire continued until dusk, and during the night the rebels evacuated the fort, escaping by a precipitous path leading to the Ravi, which flowed several hundred feet below.

On the 10th September, Mr. J. Lawrence, Commissioner of the Jullundur Doab, reached Kangra, and on the 13th arrived at Nurpur, when he heard that Ram Singh occupied a long narrow hill in the immediate vicinity of the town. He had perpetrated several dacoities and had written circular letters to the headmen of villages, inviting them to join him. On the morning of the 14th, Mr. Lawrence and Major Fisher reconnoitred the enemy's position and the surrounding country, which was difficult. It was found that cavalry could act with difficulty on the south, a wide ravine, interspersed with rice fields, running along that side; on the North the country was much more

difficult, being broken in every direction into hundreds of little spurs running out from the main chain on which the insurgents were posted. Reinforcements were brought up, and on the morning of the 19th, Ram Singh and his followers were dispersed. The force with Mr. Lawrence consisted of 360 men of the 1st Sikh Regiment, under Major Hodgson, of whom 300 attacked on the one side; two companies 29th Native Infantry under Lieutenant Johnston, who went up on another side; four companies 71st Native Infantry under Captain Rind, and 150 men of the Kangra Regiment under Lieutenant Wallace made a long detour and, mounting the Eastern extremity of the hill, gained possession of the heights. Major Fisher commanded the whole force, and with the 15th Irregular Cavalry guarded the Southern and Western sides of the hill. The casualties amounted to one sepoy killed and 9 wounded; the enemy sustained considerable loss. . . .

On the 8th January (1849) Brigadier General Wheeler marched from Pathankot against a body of insurgents under Ram Singh, who had taken up a position on the Dalla mountain north of Shahpur. He sent the 4th Native Infantry and a risala of Irregular Cavalry under command of Lieutenant Colonel D. Downing, up the bed of the Chaki river, to take post at the opposite end of the mountain where the ascent was easier than on the Shahpur side. At Shahpur he found that a range of hills had to be crossed to reach the Dalla mountain. He had hoped to avoid this range by marching up the bed of the river Ravi, but it was found that the fords were too deep and the stream too rapid, so a road was made across a gorge which crossed the intervening hills, the work occupying three days. At the foot of the Dalla mountain three days were employed in reconnoitring, and on the 15th and 16th January three columns marched to different points from which a simultaneous attack was made on the latter date. The enemy were driven from their stronghold with considerable loss, 35 bodies being counted. On the British side Cornet Christie, 7th Light Cavalry, and Jemadar Ram Kishan Singh, 1st Sikh Local Infantry, were killed, and Lieutenant Peel, 2nd-in-command of the latter corps, was wounded.

## Muslim Politics in the Punjab, 1870-1890

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Serious gaps exist in the historiography of the Muslim community in the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent. Scholars have tended to focus on the pre-British period and the growth of the demand for a separate Muslim state following the Curzon era, but with a few notable exceptions, little detailed attention has been paid to political developments among Muslims during the nineteenth century. This is unfortunate because communal tensions, pressures, and separatism emerged during the nineteenth century which later found expression in formal political channels. It seems likely, for example, that future investigation will demonstrate that Hindu-Muslim antagonism in the 1920's, the resurgence of Muslim political associations in the 1930's, and even the movement for the creation of Pakistan had their roots in the turbulent history of Bengal and the Punjab prior to 1900.

The problem of finding and utilizing sources has contributed significantly to the limited studies of this phase of Muslim history. Many vernacular newspapers and tracts have been lost to the ravages of time, fire, or the white ant, while private papers of Muslim families have either been destroyed or lie buried in dusty trunks. Official records and the vast collection of proscribed literature, much of which can only be found in English depositories, remained closed to scholars until the British left India. The dispersal of official proceedings in England, India and Pakistan since 1947 has further complicated the efforts of historians to reconstruct an accurate picture of Muslim social and political activity.

Within the last decade, however, that reconstruction has begun. The following collections of records and official publications are now open to bonafide scholars: West Pakistan Record Office, Lahore (Punjab Government proceedings and Secretariat library); West Pakistan Board of Revenue Archives (Punjab Financial Commissioner proceedings and library); National Archives of India, New Delhi (Indian Government proceedings on Bengal and the Punjab, including political and confidential files, open to 1945); Indian National Library, Calcutta (Bengal proceedings and Secretariat library); India Office

Library, London (private papers, printed proceedings of the Indian, Bengal and Punjab governments) Scholars are beginning to investigate source material in the records and vernacular tracts. More importantly, historical societies are systematically collecting material and encouraging research on the British period. The Research Society of Pakistan and the Historical Research Institute (Punjab University Lahore), for example, have preserved old newspapers and published several studies dealing with pre-1900 Muslim society and politics in the Punjab.<sup>1</sup>

This essay with appended documents attempts to make a small contribution to the ongoing study into the origins of Muslim political activity. The first purpose of the paper is to examine some of the events culminating in the 1888 anti-Congress demonstrations among Punjabi Muslims. Although the discussion is based on government records and hitherto unused primary sources, it should in no sense be considered a final assessment of the period. Rather, the essay aims at suggesting basic processes and problems which require further analysis. The second goal is to make available translations of two significant Urdu political tracts written during the anti-Congress movement. The tracts illuminate Hindu-Muslim relations and the shifting ideologies within the Muslim community. Their translation and publication also will underline the existence of such contemporary material and encourage fresh use of tracts and collections in scattered depositories.

#### **Muslim Politics Prior to 1884**

Muslim politicians were primarily engaged in three types of political activity prior to 1884. First, both educated and illiterate urban Muslims worked within cultural organizations, or anjumans, to strengthen their own community. Muslim leaders also carried out extensive agitation to force the British to give their co-religionists more representation in the bureaucracy and educational system. These two activities did not prevent a third, Muslim alliance with Hindu in

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1. For example, articles and commentary on publication plans in the *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan*, I, Pt. II (Oct. 1964) and the issue of the *Journal of the Panjab University Historical Society* (XV, Jan. 1963) which reproduces valuable archival documents on the Central Muhammadan Association of Calcutta and Muslim agitation in the Punjab. The *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan* and the *Panjab Past and Present*, Patiala, also are publishing an increasing number of informative articles on this period.

opposing acts of British *zulm* (oppression) or defending issues affecting the western-educated class as a whole. Muslims occasionally joined Hindus in organizations or specific demonstrations. The alliance dissolved as soon as common issues were removed, but the potential remained for future co-operation.

Punjabi Muslims responded to a number of diverse pressures following annexation in 1849 by organizing and joining associations which tried to protect and strengthen the Muslim community. Missionary proselytization, often backed formally or informally by British civil servants, spurred the creation of a network of Muslim anjumans. These societies, such as the Delhi and Lahore Anjuman-i-Islamia, were initially concerned with guarding Muslim endowments and stemming apostasy.<sup>2</sup> By the 1870's additional crises had emerged which propelled Muslims further toward reform and 'self-strengthening.' First, the Brahmo and Arya Samajes contributed to Hindu militancy.<sup>3</sup> At the same time that Hindus seemed to become more anti-Muslim, it was becoming evident that Muslims had fallen far behind Hindus in the race for western education and employment. Besides the loss of potential income, Hindu ascendancy in the public services posed a serious threat to Muslims because official posts were sources of power which could be manipulated to support communal claims and to attack religious opponents.<sup>4</sup> Muslims consequently began to convert existing anjumans into organs of reform and revival, a process exemplified by the Lahore Anjuman-i-Islamia. The Anjuman had originally been supported by conservative aristocrats and chiefly supervised endowments, but when a retired government servant, Barkat Ali, became secretary in 1877, the Anjuman was transformed into a reform society supporting the leading social and religious

2. Mian Shah Din, "Mohamedan Societies in the Punjab," *The Indian Magazine*, 1888, pp. 188-90; Muharram Ali Chisti, *Jawab Mazmun ka Risala Mnsamma ka Muraqqa-i-Tahsib* (Lahore, nd), pp. 11-12.

3. The following on the Arya and Brahmo Samaj: Jamiat Rai, *Hamare Nau Jawan* (Lahore, 1889), pp. 1-7; B.C. Pal, *Memories of My Life and Times* (Calcutta, 1932-51), II, 25, 68-82; Lajpat Rai (ed. V.C. Joshi), *Lajpat Rai Autobiographical Writings* (Delhi, 1965), pp. 23-29. A detailed discussion of this militancy is in K.W. Jones, "The Arya Samaj in the Punjab," unpub. diss., U. of Calif., 1966, ch. II.

4. "Thagi Report on Communal unrest, 1880-1889," sec. I, Punjab Government General File (PGG), Jan. 1887, 12-12a. Unless otherwise noted, citations to PG files are to printed records in the India office Library. Citations including "KW" (Keep-with) are in the West Pakistan Record Office.

'modernizer' of Indian Muslims, Syed Ahmed Khan.<sup>5</sup> Under Barkat Ali's leadership, the Anjuman built schools, established a newspaper, and tried to revive the spirits of Muslims by organizing branches in twenty Punjab districts. A few Muslim lawyers and college students initially joined in the new effort, but they soon became dissatisfied with the aristocratic inclinations and limited program of the Anjuman-i-Islamia. "Middle class Mohamedans" therefore revived another Muslim association, the Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam (Society for the Defence of Islam) and carried out their own reforms.<sup>6</sup> The heads of the new Anjuman included government officials and two barristers influenced by Syed Ahmed, Muhammad Shafi and Shah Din. The two Anjumans co-operated, but the new one was more bold in its attempt to westernize Punjabi Muslims. It made English compulsory in Anjuman high schools so that Muslims would acquire more government posts, stressed female education, and defended the more advanced ideas of Syed Ahmed.<sup>7</sup> In addition to reform and education, Anjumans became platforms for countering Hindu propaganda. Taking a lead from the Arya Samajists, who quickly deployed new techniques of agitation and propaganda, Muslims organized a system of street-preaching, published papers defending Islam, and founded a tract society.<sup>8</sup>

The second era of Muslim activity was an organized campaign to influence official policy affecting Punjabi Muslims. These campaigns revolved around, but were not limited to, the bread-and-butter issues of education and employment.<sup>9</sup> In 1877, for example, the Delhi Anjuman-i-Islamia held meetings on the problem of Muslim backwardness in new professions and petitioned the British to reserve special places for Muslims until all offices contained "half Hindus and half

5. Mian Shah Din, "Mohamedan Societies," 188-90. For a succinct discussion of his program and ideology, W.C. Smith, *Modern Islam in India* (London, 1946), pp. 15-23; Bashir Ahmad, *Justice Shah Din* (Lahore, 1962), pp. 278-319.
6. Mian Shah Din, "Mohamedan Societies," p. 190.
7. Mian Shah Din, "Mohamedan Societies," pp. 191-92; Bashir Ahmad, *Shah Din*, pp. 251-57.
8. Ghulam Sadiq, *Ek Muslman ki Ultimas Qaum Ki Khidmat Men* (Amritsar, 1893), pp. 9-11; "Thagi Report," sec. 3. The Mohamedan Literary and Tract Society of Lahore was founded in 1882, and by 1892 had published at least twenty items either attacking Hinduism or defending Islam.
9. Other issues included compulsory Vaccination and official interference in pilgrimages.



Muhammadans.”<sup>10</sup> Although the government denied the request, sporadic demonstrations over the issue continued. In 1881 Muslim leaders decided to make a more systematic representation on the occasion of the calling of the Hunter Education Commission. Punjabi Muslims hoped that the commission would recommend that their community be given special advantages such as reserved scholarships. Hindus opposed this, but they wanted the commission to recommend a change in language policy. Hindus wished to replace Urdu, the official language in courts and secondary education, with Hindi, a language they considered the *lingua franca* of Hindus throughout India. Muslims opposed the change on the grounds that Urdu closely resembled Persian, a vernacular some Muslims thought to be their “national language.” Muslims also feared a shift toward Hindi would give Hindus further employment advantages.<sup>11</sup> Each community thus tried to influence the commission on the issues of language and Muslim favouritism. Hindus and Muslims excitedly prepared petitions and held public meetings. Local anjumans sponsored Muslim rallies, while Hindu reform societies were behind the effort to rally Hindu “public opinion”.<sup>12</sup> When the British did not listen to the remonstrances, controversy subsided, but each subsequent inquiry reopened the issue.

Despite the intensity of communal competition, Hindus and Muslims could co-operate in a political organization transferred to the Punjab from Bengal in 1877, the Lahore Indian Association. Defence of community did not necessarily preclude other types of political activity, particularly, on occasions when urban Punjabis felt under common attack. Until 1883 the Indian Association had been a predominantly Hindu organization which criticized the British through the Lahore *Tribune* and tried unsuccessfully to interest educated Punja-

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10. Memorial, official reply, and notes, Government India Home File (GIH), May 1877, 11 A. GI records from NAI, New Delhi.
  11. Commission discussed in Zafar-ul-Islam and Raymond L. Jensen, “Indian Muslims and the Public Services, 1875-1915,” *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan*, IV (1964), 85-193. Also see relevant documents in *Journal of the Punjab University Historical Society* (XV, Jan, 1963).
  12. Lajpat Rai commentary, *Autobiography*, pp. 22, 26, 79; Hindu and Muslim testimony, *Punjab Committee of the Education Commission* (Calcutta, 1884), pp. 104-5, 194-95; 246-47, 471. Also, resolution 306 A, Oct. 2, 1883, PGG Feb. 1889 (KW), 14-22 A.

bis in agitation over broad, secular issues.<sup>13</sup> In 1883, however, a change in the political climate widened the scope and membership of the Association. That year the government tried to enact the Ilbert Bill permitting Indian Judges jurisdiction over Europeans. The Bill met with unexpected opposition from Europeans, who demonstrated loudly and formed "defence associations." Civil servants and English businessmen in Lahore held meetings and wrote stinging letters to local newspapers. Criticism often degenerated into racist charges concerning Punjabi morality. Mounting European hostility evoked a counteragitation by the Lahore Indian Association. Punjabis rallied to the support of the Association and denounced the overt bigotry of local Europeans. Hindus and Muslims spoke from the same platform, for the issue was no longer Hindu versus Muslim, but Punjabi versus European.<sup>14</sup>

The Ilbert Bill and similar racial incidents paved the way for temporary co-operation among urban Punjabis. Hindus and Muslims formed "unity societies" to improve communal relations and mixed socially.<sup>15</sup> Growing co-operation also was reflected in the transformation of the Indian Association into a broad-based organisation representing all urban Punjabis. In 1883, a Brahmo Samajist, Dyal Singh, became president, two Bengalis were secretaries, and the executive council included several Muslims and Arya Samajists.<sup>16</sup>

The highpoint in Hindu-Muslim collaboration was Syed Ahmed Khan's visit to the Punjab in January of 1884. Syed Ahmed made the tour to collect funds for his Aligarh projects but he also spent considerable time attending political meetings and urging communal

13. Ruchi Ram Sahni, "Self-Revelations of an Octogenarian" (mss in possession of V.C. Joshi, Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi), pp. 201-203; B.C. Pal, *Memories*, II, 20-21. Also, *Tribune*, March 24, 1883.
14. *Tribune*, March 17, Sept 15, 1883. Also following letters in *Civil and Military Gazette* (CMG): "An Old Anglo-Indian" (March 1, 1883); "An Old Settler" and "One of the Garrison" (March 7, 1883). Apparently a few Muslim and Hindu aristocrats were afraid to support the Bill. A general view of Muslim reaction is in Zafar-ul-Islam and J.M. Woldman, "Indian Muslims and the Ilbert Bill: 1883-1884," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan*, VIII, No. 2 (Dec. 1963), 131-56.
15. *Tribune*, June 9, 1883. Also, Ruchi Ram Sahni, "Self-Revelation," pp. 204-208. A second issue bringing Hindus and Muslims together was the arrest of Surendranath Banerjee for criticizing the demand of a High Court judge that an idol be brought into court (the "Norris Case").
16. *Tribune*, March 10, 1883. Also, "Thagi Report," sec. I.

accord. At each town on his itinerary Syed Ahmed was met by joint Hindu-Muslim delegations. In Amritsar and Lahore he stated that Hindus and Muslims were members of the same "Indian nation," and he called on them to work together in "patriotic" organizations such as the Indian Association to improve the political condition of India.<sup>17</sup>

Despite Syed Ahmed's pleas the fragile entente fell to pieces. Mutual threats had temporarily driven the diverse Punjab communities together, and between 1884 and 1887, new sources of tension drove them apart. As Muslims responded to these new elements by organizing once again to protect their own interests, opportunity for political co-operation across religious lines declined.

#### **Muslims and Communal Politics, 1884-1887**

Systematic Arya campaigns against Islam and the spread of communal rioting contributed to widening cleavages among urban Punjabis. Following the death of Dayanada in 1883, one section of the Arya Samaj increasingly assailed Muslims. The resulting controversy in public meetings and the press hardened existing divisions and tended to institutionalize old patterns of conflict and distrust.<sup>18</sup>

The cow protection movement and sporadic violence accompanied religious controversy. Ranjit Singh had formerly prohibited kine slaughter in the Punjab because Hindus and some Sikhs considered the cow a sacred animal. The British removed the ban, but in order to protect the religious feelings of the volatile Sikhs and Hindus, the government ordered Muslim butchers to slaughter cattle in isolated areas and to cover the meat in public. Few incidents occurred over the explosive issue during the first decades of British rule.<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, between 1883 and 1891 more than fifteen major riots took place over kine slaughter or related issues such as playing instruments in front of religious institutions. The outburst was due primarily to three factors. First, Aryas established cow protection societies in many towns and fanned Hindu resentment over slaughter. These societies and Arya efforts to force officials to alter traditional locations

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17. The tour and Punjab response admirably discussed in Syed Hameed Ahmed, "Sayyad Ahmad Khan's Visit to the Punjab," *Journal of the Panjab University Historical Society*, XV (April, 1963), 49-69. A contemporary assessment in *Tribune*, Feb. 2, 9, 1884.

18. K.W. Jones, "The Arya Samaj and Communal Tensions in the Punjab, 1877-1897," *Journal of Asian Studies* (Dec. 1968), 4-15.

19. PG proclamation, March 29, 1849, appendix to "Thagi Report," sec. 1.

of butcher shops often generated rioting.<sup>20</sup> Spread of cow societies coincided with three years (1885-1887) in which Ramlila, a Hindu festival of merrymaking, fell in the same period as Muharram. When Muslim funeral processions and Hindu parades collided, or when kine sacrifice came to the attention of Hindus, riots followed.<sup>21</sup> The spread of communications which made possible the rapid transmission of news and rumour also added to unrest. The *Akhbar-i-Am*, for example, printed a rumour of rioting in Lahore and almost precipitated a real disturbance.<sup>22</sup> Although the government had regained control of the situation by 1893 and prevented further rioting, the decade of violence left a lingering scar of bitterness.

Elections and control of municipal institutions also divided Hindus and Muslims. Before the granting of "local self-government" in 1884 under Lord Ripon, opportunity for continual competition by religious communities had been limited. The Punjab had no legislative council, and municipal posts were almost universally filled by appointment.<sup>23</sup> This changed in 1884 when the government gave Punjabis the opportunity to elect municipal committees. The initial elections were savagely contested because control of the institutions meant the power to distribute public funds and appoint salaried officials.<sup>24</sup> Hindus had a majority of voters and won most of the elections. The election campaigns especially aroused Hindu-Muslim tension in Delhi, Lahore, Multan, Amritsar, Hoshiarpur and Ludhiana. The elections occasioned such unrest that eventually the British intervened and set up separate electorates so that members of a constituency could only vote for co-religionists.<sup>25</sup> The committees nevertheless remained a source

20. Thagi and Dakaiti Department Special Branch Note on the Agitation against Cow-Killing, Aug. 9, 1893 (pp. 1-7), GI Public (P), Jan. 1894, 309-414 B. An example of how Aryas heated the issue was their effort in Ferozepur to force the closure of butcher shops. Correspondence and notes, PGG, Nov. 1888, 2-6A.

21. Delhi Com. to PG, 8C, Oct. 30, 1886, and enclosures, PGG Jan. 1887, 12-12A; Note on Cow-Killing Agitation, p. 8.

22. Lahore Com. to PG, 530, Oct. 27, 1885; PG to GI, 598, March 26, 1886, PGG March 1886, 11-26A.

23. PG resolution 34-619, May 3, 1872, PG Revenue (R), May 1872, 4A.

24. New committees discussed in PG to GI Sept. 1, 1883, and subsequent correspondence, GI Legislative (L), Oct. 1884, 16-104A.

25. Based on an examination of two years of Punjab committee proceedings, 1883-1884. For separate electorates, "Review of Punjab Municipal Administration," sec. 1, GI Municipal, Jan. 1892, 7-9A.

of tension, with Hindu or Muslim factions manipulating patronage to support their religious community.<sup>26</sup>

These fresh or renewed sources of tension had an almost immediate effect on Hindu-Muslim co-operation. As the *Tribune* warned, elections and riots threatened the "new-found friendship."<sup>27</sup> Muslims nominally remained in the Indian Association until 1885, but when the *Tribune* and Hindu members of the Association defended a Hindu interpretation of riots during the summer of 1885, most prominent Muslims cut off support.<sup>28</sup>

Withdrawal from the Indian Association, which left Muslims without formal channels for voicing their opinion and needs to the government, came at the very time when Punjabi Muslims felt under increasing pressure to improve their position in the public services. Communal favouritism had spread in the lower branches of Punjab administration, with Hindus and Muslims often giving appointments and jobs only to co-religionists. An official investigation in 1895, for example, revealed that for a decade Hindu Khatri controlled several district offices and prevented qualified Muslims from rising above clerkships.<sup>29</sup> Not only was nepotism rampant, it was also receiving more publicity. By the late 1880's Punjab editors were publishing frequent exposés of ugly incidents in which officials mistreated individuals because of their religion.<sup>30</sup> These reports, whether rumour or fact, exasperated the aggrieved community and accentuated the tendency to defend communal interests. As one newspaper noted, "bigotry in the public services" meant that "unless our community makes every effort to help and defend our co-religionists, we are lost."<sup>31</sup>

Frustration over Muslim backwardness set the stage for the Aitchison Public Service Commission agitation in 1886 and 1887. Three questions connected with the inquiry stimulated rivalry: simultaneous examinations for the civil service in India and England, the

26. For example, incidents discussed in PG Committee (C), Jan. 1886, 15-16A; PGC May 1887, 3-8A.

27. *Tribune*, May 17, 1884.

28. Ghulam Sadiq, *Musalman*, p. 2; also, "Thagi Report," sec. 3

29. Undated memo on "relationships of district officials," PGC (KW), Dec. 1896, 49-141A.

30. For example, *Singh Sahai*, Aug. 13, 1890, *Selections from the Punjab Vernacular Press (SPVP)*, 1890, p. 309; *Tribune*, Feb. 2, 1884, Dec. 18, 1886.

31. *Rafiq-i-Hind*, Jan. 26, 1886, attached to "Thagi Report." Also, comments of author, Muharram Ali Chisti, in *Jawab Mazmun*, p. 16.

nature and method of recruitment of administrative cadres subordinate to the civil service, and reservation of appointments for Muslims. It was commonly acknowledged that if simultaneous exams were held in India, the increased number of Indians in the ICS would primarily be Hindu; similarly, Hindus would probably dominate open competition for the lower services because of their education.<sup>32</sup> Muslim concern over their plight and the exertions of an outside Muslim organization, the Central National Mahomedan Association of Bengal, made the resulting demonstrations more bitter and hotly contested than the earlier ones over the Hunter Commission. The Mahomedan Association, begun by Amir Ali in 1879, had promoted the "well-being of Mussulmans of India" with a series of petitions calling for Muslim advantages in education and employment.<sup>33</sup> The Association had little influence in the Punjab for several years, but in 1885 a young Muslim editor, Muharram Ali Chisti, began to champion Amir Ali in his paper, the *Rafiq-i-Hind*. At the age of 23 Muharram Ali already had a reputation for instability and impetuous action. He was a strong opponent of Syed Ahmed Khan, whom he felt was a heretic undermining Muslim civilization. In politics, he supported the Indian Association fight against Urdu in 1882, spent a month in jail in 1885 for libelling a Hindu officer, and the same year denounced the Indian Association as an "arrogant" Hindu organ.<sup>34</sup> Through his efforts, six branches of the Mahomedan Association action were formed in the Punjab by 1886. Most of the members were petty officials or aristocrats without knowledge of English, and several, like Muharram Ali, were known for their opposition to Syed Ahmed Khan.<sup>35</sup> The Punjab branches led the assault on Hindu domination

32. *Proceedings of the Public Service Commission, Punjab Commission and Evidence* (Calcutta, 1887), 1, 17-19. Analysis of the agitation and findings of the committee are in Zafar-ul-Islam and Jensen, "Indian Muslims," pp. 95-112.
33. *Central National Mohammedan Association, Rules and Objects* (Calcutta, 1885), pp. ii, 1-24. Also, "Memoirs of the Late Right Hon'ble Syed Amer Ali," *Islamic Culture*, VI (1932), 9-18, 163-71; documents in *Journal of the Panjab University Historical Society*, XV (Jan. 1963).
34. *Tribune* March 28, 1885; comments on Muharram Ali in "Report on the Panjab Vernacular Press, 1885-86," GIP June 1887, 22-24A. For religious views, review of his book on Syed Ahmed, *Catalogue of Books Registered in the Punjab* (Quarterly Report, June 30, 1893) pp. 38-39.
35. *Triennial Report of the Central National Mohammedan Association of India* (Calcutta, 1888), pp. 4-6. List of Punjab members given in the report and in CMG, April 7, Nov. 17, 1888.

of official posts. Meetings were held, and petitions prepared for the Aitchison Commission. Circulars bordering on hate literature counselled witnesses to emphasis Hindu-Muslim antagonism and to demand an end to "clerical clerk" monopoly of "places of power."<sup>36</sup> Hindus conducted counter-meetings and called on Muslims to "quit acting like children" and "fight their battles like men."<sup>37</sup> The Commission arrived in Lahore in December and for a month heard Muslim witnesses' plea for special privileges and Hindu witnesses defend competition. Muslim agitation continued after the Commission hearings. Delegates from the Anjuman-i-Islamia and the Mahomedan Association met the new Lieutenant Governor, James Lyall, with requests that Muslims be given a share of posts equal to their proportion of the population. Lyall refused, but that refusal did not prevent further demonstrations.<sup>38</sup>

The issue of militant agitation tended to divide Punjabi Muslims. The patron and chief advisor of many anjumans, Syed Ahmed Khan, preached the doctrine that the economic and political future of Indian Muslims depended largely upon British patronage. If Muslims abstained from agitation, avoided offending the rulers and convinced them of Muslim loyalty, he argued the British would protect Muslim interests. Syed Ahmed consequently frowned upon prolonged demonstrations against the government.<sup>39</sup> Syed Ahmed's opponents attacked this philosophy, arguing instead that Muslims could progress only by continued agitation under the leadership of Amir Ali and an all-India Muslim organization. In early 1887 Syed Ahmed's Punjab followers defended his strategy and called on "respectable" Muslims to give up anti-British agitation. The Mahomedan Association branches soon collapsed. Muslims ceased bombarding the government with demands and tended instead to concentrate upon education and "expressing loyalty" to the British.<sup>40</sup> Moreover,

36. Circular printed in *Tribune*, Jan. 19, 1887.

37. *Tribune*, Dec. 15, 18, 1886.

38. *Tribune*, April 27, 1887; *CMG* April 25, 1887.

39. For discussion of Syed Ahmed's political views, the following: Rafiq Ahmed Zakaria, "Muslims in India: A Political Analysis (1885-1966)," unpub. PhD diss., SOAS, London U., 1948, pp. 93-97. Bashir Ahmad, *Shah Din*, pp. 320-47, Ram Gopal, *Indian Muslims* (New York, 1959), pp. 65-67.

40. *A Brief Report of the Third Muhammadan Education Conference* (Lahore, 1888), pp. 4-6, 23-27; Muharram Ali, *Jawab Mazmun*, pp. 31-32. The process is not altogether clear and requires further study.

they expelled from their anjumans "trouble-makers" who questioned the religious or political views of Syed Ahmed. The first to go was Muharram Ali Chisti, an advocate of Muslim militancy.<sup>41</sup>

The problem of how to improve the Muslim position had thus brought to the surface in the Punjab two conflicting strategies, pressure upon the British and a campaign to win official patronage through self-help and expressions of loyalty. The latter temporarily won out among Punjabi Muslim politicians. Although, as will be subsequently shown, this strategy did not mean that Muslims gave up politics, it did result in Muslim hesitancy to associate with agitation directed against the British. This commitment and the continued influence of Syed Ahmed Khan in the Punjab became crucial determinants of Muslim relations with the Punjab Congress.

### **Muslims and the Punjab Congress, 1885-1890**

Although only one Punjabi Muslim attended a Congress session prior to 1888 the initial response of the Punjab Muslim community toward the Congress, as reflected in the Punjab press, was neutrality and "watchful waiting."<sup>42</sup> In 1888, however, the anti-Congress movement headed by Syed Ahmed and the virulent reaction of Punjab Congressmen helped transform Muslim neutrality into opposition.

Syed Ahmed had originally considered the Calcutta Indian Association "patriotic" and lauded Bengali politicians as models for young Indians.<sup>43</sup> By 1888 his views had changed. The Muslim leader distrusted the Congress because it championed programs such as open competition and elective legislative councils which seemed to threaten the Muslim community. Hindus would have an advantage in competition. While as a majority group they would control the legislatures too. The government appeared to be anti-Congress, and Syed Ahmed believed that Muslims could advance only by remaining on good terms with the British. Patronage and self-improvement would lead to the betterment of Indian Muslims; association with the Congress, whose program hurt Muslims and whose opposition to the government might alienate British support for Muslims, would

41. Drawn from the following press accounts: *Tribune*, Nov. 16, Dec. 17, 1887, Jan. 2, 1889; *CMG*, Nov. 17, 1887.

42. *Tribune*, April 7, 27, 1887.

43. *Tribune*, Feb. 9, 1884. Also, speeches in Syed Hameed Ahmed, "Syed Ahmed Visit," pp. 56-61.



be disastrous.<sup>44</sup>

The first indication of concerted Muslim opposition to the Congress came in December of 1886. The *Aligarh Institute Gazette* and the National Mahomedan Association denounced the organization and warned Muslims to remain clear of "Bengali babus" and sedition.<sup>45</sup> Gaining momentum in 1887, the anti-Congress movement culminated in the Lucknow and Meerut speeches of Syed Ahmed in which he publicly attacked the Congress and called for a reaffirmation of Muslim loyalty to the British. The speeches were followed with the formation of a "United Indian Patriotic Association" whose platform was Congress opposition and emphasis on improving relations between Indians and Englishmen.<sup>46</sup> Syed Ahmed's call evoked a positive response from many of his Punjabi followers. At least 15 of the 54 Muslim organizations affiliating with the new Association were Punjabi, mostly branches of the Anjuman-i-Islamia and the Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam.<sup>47</sup> The Amritsar Anjuman-i-Islamia also prepared resolutions publicizing Syed Ahmed's arguments and in February of 1888 distributed 600 copies of his Lucknow speech.<sup>48</sup>

The congress tried to meet the challenge by cultivating Muslim support in Bombay, for example a prominent Muslim Congressman, Badruddin Tyabji, attempted to undercut the influence of Syed Ahmed and prevent Muslims from attending an anti-Congress conference.<sup>49</sup> Following the lead of its parent organization, the Punjab Congress Committee (the executive council of the Lahore Indian Association) adopted a three-prong strategy for halting the anti-Congress moves. First, the *Tribune* personally attacked Syed Ahmed. Claiming that the "Pope of Allighur" had no right to speak for Indian Muslims, the *Tribune* published editorials and letters

44. Speech in *Pioneer Mail*, Jan. 18, 1888; United Patriotic Association, *Showing the Seditious Character of the Indian National Congress* np, nd).

45. *Triennial Report of Mahomedan Association*, pp. 21-22; *Tribune*, Dec. II, 1886, Jan. 18, 1888.

46. *Pioneer Mail*, Jan. 18, 1888. For a discussion of the Association's constitution, Zafar-ul-Islam", Documents on Indo-Muslim Politics," *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society* (Jan. 1964), pp. 14-18.

47. List in "Documents", pp. 17-18; Zakaria, "Indian Muslims," appendix B.

48. *Tribune*, Feb. 4, 1888.

49. Discussed in Husain B. Tyabji, *Badruddin Tyabji* (Bombay, 1952), pp. 194-205; Ram Gopal, *Indian Muslims*, pp. 65-67.

harshly criticizing Syed Ahmed.<sup>50</sup> Too, Hindu leaders of the Congress attempted to integrate Muslims into public meetings in order to validate the claim that "only a few followers of Sir Syed who were much deceived" actually opposed the nationalist organization.<sup>51</sup> Finally, the Congress imported outside speakers, particularly Muslims, who whipped up enthusiasm among Punjabis of each community. In the fall of 1888, for example, Badruddin Tyabji, Mohammed Ali Bhimji, and other Muslim politicians toured Punjab district towns in an effort to increase Muslims attendance at the coming session.<sup>52</sup>

The energetic Congress campaign accelerated the anti-Congress efforts of Punjabi Muslims. In addition to the goal of divorcing themselves from the Congress Muslims also concentrated on labelling the Congress as a seditious Hindu organization. The underlying assumption was that if it could be shown that the Hindu commercial class, which dominated public services, formed the Punjab Congress, the government would then take jobs away from these "disloyal" Hindus and give a larger share to "loyal" Muslims. Muslim leaders adopted a variety of tactics to achieve these dual goals. First, they tried to neutralize Congress claims of Muslim support by holding anti-Congress meetings attended by prominent Muslims. Wherever the Congress held demonstrations for visiting Muslim politicians, anti-Congress Muslims countered with "opposition rallies."<sup>53</sup> Secondly, an attempt was made to isolate and question the motives of Muslims openly siding with the Congress. Social and religious pressure was brought to bear in cases of obstinacy, with several Muslim merchants and lawyers coming under economic boycott.<sup>54</sup> A final move was dissemination of anti-Congress propaganda. The charges of the *Tribune* and the vernacular Congress papers to the effect that Muslims were being taught "to lick the feet of the powers that be" aroused

50. *Tribune*, Sept. 29, 1888. A series of Lajpat Rai letters were printed separately as a volume and are reproduced in V.C. Joshi (ed) *Lala Lajpat Rai: Writings and Speeches* (Delhi, 1966), I, 1-25.

51. *Tribune*, May 23, 1888.

52. Reports in *Tribune*, Sept. 29, Oct. 3, 1888.

53. *Tribune*, Oct. 3, 1888. Also, discussion of counter-agitation in the documents following this section.

54. Letters and reports in following *Tribune* issues: Sept. 12, 29, Oct. 3, 6, 10, Nov. 21, 1888. Kay Robinson, editor of the *CMG*, was intimately involved in the controversy because he sided with the Muslims in order to wean them away from the Congress. Robinson to PG, Nov. 6, 1888, PGG Feb. 1889 (KW), 14-22 A. For an example, *CMG* Sept. 20, 1888.

bitter counter-attacks. Hindu-Muslim antagonism, boiling for over a decade, was reflected in the violent exchanges. The following selections from an anti-Congress poem are indicative of the emotional involvement and the explosive atmosphere surrounding the issue of Congress membership :

This is a tale at which all men can laugh,  
A tale about how greed eats at some men's hearts.  
These men are determined to be disloyal,  
They all talk of their greatness.

Refrain : Idols are desiring to become God,  
This alone is the glory of your greatness.

There is much crookedness in the straight path,  
New thoughts are now emerging.  
Men are guided to do wrong things,  
Headed to fight with the government.

There is a lust for starting a war,  
A war between the mountain and the mustard seed.  
We say this for the benefit of all :  
Moneylenders should listen to the truth.

The bravery of the Congress is tormenting,  
For the Congress has decided to oppose imperialism.  
What thing is this Congress, this evil,  
What is its true nature, and what does it want ?

Congress is the name of a committee  
Of which Bengalis have laid the foundation.  
They want to make noise and disturbance,  
And now they claim they are the men to rule.

With the Bengalis are the Hindus,  
And on the surface, there is no difference.  
They hold meetings everywhere,  
They both desire their own kingdom.

Arousing shopkeepers and moneylenders,  
Sweet-sellers and bankers.  
They will tie the *dhoti* in the Congress  
They are telling all—we shall become King.

This new thing we have witnessed here,

It has never been seen or heard before.  
They all ask for kingdom,  
Those who sell flour, pulse, oil, and ghi.

Now they say this to the government :  
We suffer from your many afflictions.  
Wounds in our hearts are now bleeding,  
Keep away from us that we might live.

Masters, pick up your tents and leave,  
Go and breathe in London.  
Lala Babu has now come,  
He who does not like English rule.

Congressmen, see the truth,  
Consider what you were in the past.  
Think a little about your background,  
Admit your true nature.

Those of you who have always lived in slavery,  
Look at your own faces in the mirror.  
See your big mouth,  
Look and then ask for a kingdom.

It is really a strange thing.  
Those who used to wander from door to door,  
Always restless and calling out for money,  
They now call for government accounts.

Those who feel shy seeing death,  
Who are afraid of even their own wives.  
If they see a soldier, they get worried,  
But now they say to all : let us have arms.

Those who can only run from their homes to the bazar,  
Whose internal reasoning is warped,  
Who get afraid seeing the stoutness of elephants,  
They think they are going to fight Russia.

Who only know how to sit on *charpois*,  
Who only know the rate of flour or salt,  
Who don't know what is happening today,  
They meditate only on bad things concerning the British throne.

Whose fathers and grandfathers had never heard  
 Of chairs and stools.  
 Yet they want to sit equally  
 With those who are now our Kings.  
 We know their pedigree,  
 But now they are bragging.  
 They have left behind all respect,  
 They now look for any cause to revolt.  
 We used to think of them as thorns and weed,  
 Men who were happy with shoe-beatings.  
 Now they say that we can do something,  
 Now they desire to sit on councils.  
 What fools are Congressmen.<sup>55</sup>

Both Congress and anti-Congress forces claimed a victory in the 1888 controversy. Congressmen pointed to the increase of Muslim attendance at sessions (1887,1; 1888,14; 1889,10) as proof that Muslims supported the Congress. The statistics, however, are misleading. Following the sharp increase, Muslim attendance fell and generally remained at a low level for the next two decades. More importantly, sole reliance upon statistics misses the heart of the matter, who attended the meetings and annual sessions, who backed the Congress, and why? There are indications that most Muslim politicians identified with the anti-Congress strategy and did not attend the sessions. The anjumans uniformly opposed the Congress, and Muslim boycott of important rallies were generally successful. As the *Tribune* mourned, "Our Mahomedan fellow-citizens were conspicuous by their absence"<sup>56</sup> Analysis of available attendance lists at anti-Congress meetings also supports such a conclusion. For example, the list for the Gurdaspur meeting of August 16, 1888, contains most of the aristocrats and professional class in the district.<sup>57</sup> If, as seems likely, the majority of Muslim opposed the Congress, then who attended Congress meetings and sessions? To validate its claims, the Congress

55. *Kangras Nama* (Gurdaspur, 1889). Background on the author, Mohammed Shams-ud-Din, is given in the introduction to a translation of his longer political tract "Mirror of the Congress" (next section).

56. *Tribune*, March 7, 1888. Also, arguments in Hashim Shah, "Muslims should Keep Away from the National Congress" (next section).

57. List appended to "Mirror of the Congress." A similar list is in *Tribune*, May 23, Dec. 15, 1888.

apparently rounded up lower-class Muslims (merchants and tenants) or tricked prominent Muslims into attending meetings. One of the two Muslims attending the Gurdaspur Congress meeting, for example, had no previous understanding of the Congress platform, and subsequently both he and the second Muslim denounced the Congress. A similar example occurred at Ferozepur where several Muslims were persuaded to attend a rally on the grounds that they would only be joining other Muslims in welcoming a visiting co-religionist.<sup>58</sup> It nevertheless seems unlikely that the Congress filled the 1888 and 1889 Muslim delegations by the same techniques. The following table shows that several delegates came from the educated professional class which certainly could not have been tricked into attending sessions far from the Punjab.

OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND, MUSLIM CONGRESSMEN<sup>59</sup>

1888	(14)	1889	(10)
Editors	4	Lawyers	5
Zamindars, Rais	3	Zamindars, Rais	2
Merchants	4	Government Service	1
Lawyers	2	Merchants	1
Unknown	1	Unknown	1

Although inadequate biographical data prevents a through analysis of background and motives, two observations emerge from available information on the delegates and subsequent Muslim Congressmen. First, while Congress leaders secured respectable Muslim delegations for two years, they were unable to maintain sustained support. Only 3 of the 14 Muslims at the 1888 meeting attended in 1889, and only 1 of the new 1889 delegates attended later sessions.<sup>60</sup> Secondly, two distinct Muslim groups were co-operative in the Congress. The first was composed of editors and lawyers, men who through professional ties or because of interest in politics joined Hindus at annual sessions. From this pool of professional Muslims came a few individuals who worked within the Congress until the formation of the Muslim League in 1907. Muhammad Mahbub Alam—editor of the influential *Paisa Akhbar*—was prominent in Congress circles and supported Congress

58. Hashim Shah, "Muslims," pp. 3-4.

59. Based on cumulative biographical files on Muslim Congressmen drawn from newspapers and annual Congress reports.

60. *Ibid.*

platforms in his paper.<sup>61</sup> Two lawyers, Nabi Baksh and Sheikh Umar Baksh of Lahore, also helped the India Association and the Congress.<sup>62</sup> A second group came from opponents of Syed Ahmed and his followers in the Punjab anjumans. Often hostile toward Hindus, these Muslims nevertheless associated with the Congress either as a protest against other Muslims or because they had been forced out of Muslim cultural organizations. At least 8 of the 24 Muslims attending the 1888-1889 sessions, for example, were noted adversaries of Syed Ahmed's reform and political ideas.<sup>63</sup> This group produced the strongest Muslim Congressman, Muharram Ali Chisti. When ejected from the Lahore Anjuman-i-Islamia after conflict with Barkat Ali, Muharram Ali denounced "non-political Muslims" and threw his lot in with the Congress.<sup>64</sup>

With these exceptions, the Punjab Muslim community broke sharply with the Congress. Two factors particularly contributed to the rejection. First, the Punjab Congress was and continued to be a predominantly Hindu organization. The ascendancy of the Arya Samaj in the Congress after 1900 reinforced its Hindu image, strengthened Muslim suspicion, and made effective Muslim participation more remote. The attacks of the Congress *Tribune* and the Arya *Panjabee* had a similar effect.<sup>65</sup> An equally important factor was that Muslims generally accepted Syed Ahmed Khan's ideas on allying with the British and militant dissociation from Congress activities. Muslim politics in the Punjab actually increased during the 1890's, but it was anti-Congress and aimed at labelling Hindus as "seditious"

61. "Report on Vernacular Press, Punjab, 1893," GIP May 1894, 98-99B. Also, editorials in *Paisa Akhbar*, Sept. 5, 1896, *SPVP*, 1896, p. 534.

62. Nabi Bakhsh was a Rajput editor and lawyer (BA, BL) who worked on the *Aftab-i-Panjab* and the *Koh-i-Nur* and attended several Congress sessions (1893, 1900, 1905). He was later joint-secretary of the Punjab Muslim League. Sheikh Umar Baksh (BA, BL) was prominent in Hoshiarpur politics and in Lahore politics following his move to Lahore in 1901. He was Vice-President of the Indian Association, attended the Congress six times (1888, 89, 93, 1901, 1905, 1906) and became a Vice-President of the Punjab Muslim League in 1908.

63. Most came from Delhi such as Maulvi Syed, Maulana Abdul Ali (ed., *Nusrat-ul-Akbar*), Shaikh Muhammad Ismail (ed., *Al-Mansur*), and Mir Yakub Ali (ed., *Al-Hakam* and a firm supporter of Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian).

64. See footnote 41. Also, *Rafiq-i-Hind*, Jan. 18, Feb. 11, 1890, *SPVP* 1890, pp 37-38; *Akhbar-i-Am*, Nov. 29, 1893, *SPVP* 1893, 666-67.

65. Discussed in Norman G. Barrier, "The Arya Samaj and Congress Politics in the Punjab, 1894-1908," *Journal of Asian Studies*, May 1967.

and Muslims as "loyal." Such an interpretation explains why Muslims invariably sided with the government in the 1890's when Hindus or the Congress attacked British officials for maladministration.<sup>66</sup> This strategy shifted after 1900 in the new political context created by the emergence of new Muslim leaders, incidents in Bengal, and the Morley-Minto reforms, but until 1907 Muslim commitment to support the *raj* against the Congress remained a principal characteristic of Muslim politics in the Punjab.

This descriptive essay has attempted to introduce some of the problems, institutions, and individuals involved in a crucial period of Muslim political development. Questions hopefully have been raised which will spur additional research. Although study of the pre-1900 period is just beginning, many of the relevant research questions seem apparent. In the Punjab, we need to know the background and membership of Muslim organizations, their methods of agitation and propaganda, and the influence of Syed Ahmed Khan (and Amir Ali) on local leaders and institutions. Because of the intimate relationship between social and political change a thorough assessment of Muslim society in the Punjab and its place in the broader social system also would be requisite. Secondly, similar questions of a comparative nature should be posed in the United Provinces, Bihar, and East Bengal. Discrete study of individual regions should permit the construction of useful models for understanding developments in other areas. Finally, it is necessary to focus on organizations (such as the Muhammadan Educational Conference, the United Patriotic Association, and others) and the key ideas (such as Pan-Islam) linking Muslims throughout India. Research must not stop with provincial analysis because only exploration of these early trans-provincial linkages will eventually make possible an understanding of the emergence of concerted Muslim political activity following the formation of the All India Muslim League.

## TWO ANTI-CONGRESS PAMPHLETS

Munshi Shams-ud-Din, a prominent Muslim politician, editor, and proprietor of the *Panjabi Akhbar* (Lahore) and the *Reformer* (Gurdaspur), wrote the pamphlet "Mirror of the National Congress"

66. For example, the Muslim defence of a police officer, Warburton, following Hindu charges of misconduct. *Singh Shahai*, July 30, 1890; *Rahbar-i-Hind*, Aug. 2, 1890, *SPVP 1890* pp. 287-88.



(*Lekcar : Aira-i-National Kangres*). Following the formation of a Congress branch at Gurdaspur, he called a special meeting of Muslims on August 16, 1888, and warned them not to join the organization. His lecture was recorded by a Hindu scribe, Babu Khuda Sud, and printed as a tract (300 copies in 1888, 300 copies in 1889). Syed Hashim Shah Bukhari, a publisher and noted rais of Ferozepur, wrote the second tract, "Muslims Should Keep Away from the National Congress" (*Neshanal Kangras Se Musلمانon Ko Bachna Chahiye*). He prepared the essay to counter the political tours of Muslim Congressmen and appended a very informative anti-Congress lecture given by Maulana Mohammed Nazur Ahmed in Delhi on October 15, 1888. The tract was published at Syed Hashim Shah's Mohammedan Machinery Press during late 1888.<sup>67</sup>

#### "MIRROR OF THE NATIONAL CONGRESS"

Dear audience. You might have heard and read much about the phrase "National Congress" in public meetings and news papers. The word has also been inscribed on our announcements for today's meeting. I nevertheless think that many people at this meeting who know only Persian and a few "Deshi" gentlemen who understand English are ignorant about the exact meaning of the word. It is therefore appropriate that I explain its meaning before beginning the formal speech.

The phrase "Congress" is a Latin derivative consisting of "cun" and "gradus." It means literally the "party of the ruler" or the "rulers of the united provinces."<sup>68</sup> Now I should explain what is currently meant by the phrase. It is the name of a large committee or party which has been founded by the English-oriented Bengalis almost three years ago. Its main object is to unite all Indians irrespective of religion, colour, or breed in order to pressure or petition the English government on the following matters :

1. The Government of India should be "representative," and therefore the present system of government is not acceptable.
2. The present system of taxation is illegal, and all Indians should thus be exempt from current taxes. The people of

67. These tracts apparently are found only in the British Museum. I am indebted to Syed Shams-ud-Husain, Hyderabad, and Waheed Abdul Sajid, Lahore, for their research assistance and aid in translation. Northern Illinois University provided funds for the translation project.

68. In fact, congress comes from *congressus* (a meeting, interview), which is derived from *congrēdi* (to come together; *com*, together, and *gradi*, to step, walk).

India should be taxed only with the approval of the Congress.

3. The annual budget is generally incomplete, and the government spends Indian tax funds carelessly. From the next budget onward the government should prepare the budget in consultation with the Congress. The expenditure approved by the Congress should be part of the budget spending, and matters disapproved by the Congress should be excluded from the budget.
4. Most of the Governors-General (Lord Lytton, Lord Ripon and Lord Dufferin, the present Governor-General) do not act according to the best interests of the people. Congress should therefore be given the right to terminate or retain the services of the Governor-General.
5. The Arms Act should be cancelled, and so on. These are the aims and objectives of the Congress.

Now let me tell you about the present and future activities of the Congress. The Congress party wants the people of India to consent to its program. In that connection a series of public meetings are to be held at different places, provinces, and towns. A "branch" is being opened in every city and village. A person should be appointed by each "branch" committee as a spokesman or representative of his area. His opinion should be regarded as the voice of the people in his area. The delegates from these branches would form the real Congress, or in other words, these representatives would be the ruling party of the Hindustan. In short, the Congress urges the English Government to accept its demands as outlined above and then plans to initiate its own rule over Indians. This is what is meant by the phrase Congress. As I have explained the general aims of the National Congress, let me throw some light upon the Congress branch at Gurdaspur which has been so active during the last few days.

Four or five days ago a public meeting was held at the house of a Hindu lawyer, Lala Ram Saran Das, in connection with the opening of a Gurdaspur Congress branch. Its proceedings were along the lines of electing delegates for the main party, a process which I have already described.

At this meeting most of the lawyers of the district (except Sheikh Ali Ahmad), Hindu shopkeepers, and numerous Muslims (under the direct influence of Hindus or for diplomatic reasons) were present. It is unconceivable that Muslims who are acquainted with the meaning and goals of the Congress would have attended that meeting.

There were only two really respectable Muslims—Shiekh Nabi Bakhsh, a lawyer who has been appointed president of the Gurdaspur Congress after a strenuous campaign by his backers, and the second is Mian Saadat Ali, a merchant who has been appointed a member of this party<sup>69</sup> I cannot say much about the learned lawyer Sheikh Nabi Bakhsh—an expert in law, mathematics, Persian, and Arabic—except to comment that being an educated man interested in tradition, he seems to have fallen into the trap of modern political maneuvering. Perhaps he is too simple to comprehend the complex situation surrounding him, and it is for this reason that I cannot feel very sorry that he has temporarily affiliated with the Congress. I am confident that when the real truth about the Congress is explained to him, he will resign at once. The most astonishing thing, however, is Mian Saadat Ali, a merchant, who knows nothing about the Congress—what it is—whether it is the name of an animal such as horse or camel or the name of a bird like crow or duck.

I myself attended that meeting out of curiosity and the desire for a funny evening. At one point I tried to exercise my freedom of expression, and it is a matter of shame and sorrow that I was booed by Congress supporters when I tried to convince people not to join the organization. The booing was supposed to cover the weaknesses of the Congress. Had I been able to express myself fully, I am sure that many individuals who had been driven to the meeting under some pressure or just from sheer ignorance would have supported my views. Due to those comments there would have been no sign of a Gurdaspur Congress branch. In any event that speech of mine created enough interest among people in Gurdaspur that they discussed my ideas on the Congress. That is the reason that I announced in the publicity for the present meeting that anybody in the meeting would be permitted to speak for or against the Congress. This attitude should be compared with the situation in which one is allowed only to speak in favour of something and not against it.

To this point I have just made introductory remarks, but now I will proceed to explain in detail all the Congress intentions. At the same time I want to make it clear that the Congress is just building

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69, Nabi Baksh was a prominent Municipal Commissioner and lawyer. He attended the 1893 Congress session and was on the Subjects Committee. It should be noted, however, that he permitted his name to be affixed to this document as an indication of an anti-Congress posture,

up false hopes.<sup>70</sup> I have adequate proof that anyone who joins the Congress is only injuring himself. Listen attentively to me.

Number one. A main object of the Congress is to establish representative government or a "panchayat system." This issue is very complex because even Congress supporters cannot convince themselves that this system is suitable for India where there are peoples of entirely different cultures and religions, and where there are sects which have been unable to get along for centuries.

In this connection, the Honorable Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, founder of Aligarh University, made several points in his speech at Meerut which are worth repeating. He said the following :—

One of the most important political issues in India is who should rule and administer the affairs of government. Suppose the English Army leaves India with its arms and ammunition—who then would rule India? Is it possible that in those circumstances Hindus and Muslims would share equally in administration? Never. One of the two would try to dominate the other. It should be understood that though Muslims are fewer in numbers than Hindus, and though few Muslims have been educated under the British system, yet they should be under-rated and considered weak. When they are determined to secure their rights, they will rise like a fighting squad which could shed the blood from one end of Bengal to the other side of India. The matter of domination after the British leave India will be determined by the will of God. There will be no peace in this country until one dominates the other. Now suppose one has achieved domination (either Hindu or Muslim), then there arises the danger of attack to that power from other countries of Europe such as Germany, France, Portugal, and Russia. No one could save India from the attacks of these threats, neither Hindu nor Muslim, Rajput or Pathan. The ultimate result would again be colonial rule in India because India is not capable of defending herself against any foreign power. It becomes apparent from this angle that there could be no real independence, only repeated foreign domination.

Now you can decide whether rule by these foreigners is preferable to British rule. Would you prefer the German government, which is already taxing her own people to death and is famous

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70. Literally *khiali-palao*.

for her warlike programs? Would you like the French or the Russians, who are known for their friendship toward Muslims and who would take great care of all the wealth and property of Hindus? In other words, everyone knows that these powers are worse than the British. It thus becomes essential for the peace and progress of India that British rule should continue for a longer time. When we acknowledge this, we see that British rule is for out betterment.

We also see that there is no example in world history of a colony demanding representative government from its ruler. The first principle of representative government is that it must be national government. The people of a nation should rule themselves. There is no historical example of one nation conquering another and then allowing it to attain self-rule—In Afghanistan, for example, where Amir Abdul Rahman is ruling, one can imagine representative government because the ruler and ruled are all Afghans. It is not so in India. Thus claim that Indians be permitted to elect council members is contrary to the essence of foreign domination. No government would agree to permit subjugated peoples to help rule their own country. This means that nobody within our Muslim nation should join an organization which demands and pursues such impossible ideas. To join the Congress and support such thoughts is working against the betterment of our nation.

Second reason not to join the Congress : Regarding the tax situation the more the Congress discusses taxes, the more it exposes its ignorance and foolish ideas on the issue. Anyone who has even limited knowledge of politics knows that no nation or government can exist without taxes. The only difference is that different nations or governments have different tax systems. In some places taxes are levied on income and are known as "Direct Taxes," whereas in other instances, tax is charged on commodities and revenues and is called an "Indirect Tax." There is little difference between the two as both have to be paid by the people, no matter what type of government—colonial, totalitarian or representative—is in control. No government can run without taxes as it would fail to carry out welfare and safety projects necessary for the country. It is a general rule that a good government cares much about the welfare of the people, pays more attention to education and justice, and not levy heavy taxes. But to achieve all these goals, money must be collected from somewhere.

If a man desires to build a beautiful home with gardens, servants, and roads, and at the same time wants to provide the best kind of education for his children, he would be considered a mad man by other people if he tried to achieve all these things without spending any money.

Some people praise the English government for building good schools, roads, rails, telegraph systems, courts and for taking care of the safety of the public. When these same people have to pay a single paisa as tax, however, they forget about the good benefits and start pointing out the faults or weakness of the government.

As a matter of fact, this attitude is highly unjust to the English. People should realize that their taxes are not wasted but utilized for our own benefits.

The Congress has a similar view about the revenue tax. I wonder sometimes what has happened to their intelligence? If the government stopped collecting revenue, who would pay the army for our protection and the safety of the countryside? Who would pay the officials and administrative assistants?

God has never created a government in this universe which gives everything to its people without imposing taxes on them. In fact, the role of government is to protect its people and to make life comfortable for them through an equitable tax system.

Reason Number Three : In discussing the budget, the Congress levels the charge that the government is extravagant in budget expenditures. In the future they demand that annual budgets be approved by the Congress. This is the Congress's most ridiculous demand. I would like to present the views of Sir Syed Ahmad on this issue :

It is said that we should be given the right to vote on the budget and only that part of the expenditure should be approved to which the Congress gives an assent. This could happen only if the ruler and the ruled are from the same people, but it cannot be transferred to a system where we are subjects of foreign rule. The English have conquered us, and we are virtually slaves. The government is therefore not going to ask our opinion concerning administration. They are not going to ask us whether they should fight in Burma. Such a practice has never occurred in the history of political domination between countries. In time of Muslim rule, the Muslim government never asked the people of India before attacking other countries. Whom should they have asked?

The people conquered by them? Our nation has ruled and is still ruling some parts of the world. Are there instances where foreign rule has permitted representative government?

There is another principle involved in the voting right of the subjected peoples. According to the Congress, those who share the expenditures by giving their life and property have the right to vote on expenditures affecting that country. In England, for example, all the money and the property of people from the Duke to the shoemaker belongs to the government in time of need. It is the duty of the public to give money and property to the government because they have a responsibility to meet its needs. They therefore acquire every right to question the budget. This principle, however, cannot apply to the Government of India because it has had to create resources for meeting expenses. The government can only take a fixed amount of land revenue from the present output, and it has to function like a corporation which administers its affairs only on a fixed income. The revenue contract with cultivators cannot be changed under any circumstances. At the same time the cultivators do not consider it the government's right to increase taxes if a pressing need occurs. If a war starts with Russia, the zamindars and other taxpayers would not be ready to pay a single paisa beyond the present rate.<sup>71</sup> It is therefore wrong in such circumstances to ask for the voting rights on the budget. In fact, it has been the tradition of all kingdoms and governments in Asia not to let the people interfere in the matters of administration and finance.

The real consideration concerning the budget should be that it does not permit extravagance. This is true even of the budget in England. To think that the Government of India is not careful about expenditures is very foolish. The present government is careful in spending even a paisa. She is entirely different from earlier kingdoms who used to donate lakhs of rupees in cash and jagir to poets and artists. The British do not spend like that. A good example of frugality is the policy of giving copy-rights to authors instead of just awarding them huge sums of money for their work. The government only charges Rs. 2 for registration and then permits the author to receive the profits from his material for at least forty years.

Many people talk about the present income of the government as

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71. "Zamindar" in the Punjab refers to any individual who owns and cultivates land. It is not restricted, as in Bengal, to large landowners.

though it were more than that of previous governments. They nevertheless are not aware of British expenditures as compared with British income. In past times a soldier was equipped with a sword costing Rs. 20 [?] and a gun costing Rs. 10 or 15. At present military expenses have risen because old arms have become obsolete. If Germans or the French develop a new gun, for example, the British cannot sit idle. They must produce a superior weapon. This process leads to expenditure and adds considerably to the problem of trying to run a government.

Reasons Four and Five : The Congress also demands that it approve all laws and the appointment of the Viceroy. I will not say much about these demands because anyone with intelligence can see that the Congress is fooling itself. The demands are absurd for the same reasons mentioned earlier.

Reason Six : The Congress wants an end to the Arms Act. I do not understand why the Congress has opened this question. If they feel the need of protection, the police and army are adequate. It is difficult to understand why they want arms for general use. I would prefer to avoid the issue of why arms were originally taken from us, but seeing that they were taken away, why should they be restored ? The issue covers many touchy points, but I would ask this gathering whether there is anyone convinced that present conditions of law and order are worse than the time when we were permitted to bear arms ? I am sure most people would agree that the peace of India would be endangered if the arms act were repealed. The illiterate Jats and ignorant folk in the villages would begin their old feuds by playing with guns, and there would be looting and robbing throughout the country.

Leaving all this aside, I still cannot understand the call for repeal. If we examine the matter, we quickly see that any respectable citizen can get a license for arms from the government. The act in reality applies to those people who are not trusted by the government—those people who are a danger to the peace of India. We should therefore be thankful to the British for such an act.

Now I wish you to understand that under these circumstances, the Congress is wrong to make such demands. The congress is actively trying to make the government its enemy, and the government has responded by keeping a strict watch on Congress activities. All local officials have been instructed to keep a record of Congress meetings. In the near future public meetings responsible for creating "political agita-



tion" may possibly be banned. Individuals responsible for initiating those public disturbances may also be arrested. The government realizes that this sort of agitation was also begun in America and resulted in the British ouster. Even if the government does not object, however, the Congress can do nothing to achieve its ends. Congressmen are just harmless creatures.<sup>72</sup> Only the Americans were successful against the British, and the Congress cannot match them even if they try.

I thus sincerely urge my fellow brethren not to join the Congress branch recently established in Gurdaspur. They should declare their opposition openly and give the government full assurance of support. They will otherwise be sorry and repent joining the Congress.

In conclusion I want to address especially those Muslims who associate with the Congress. Muslims should not desire the same goals for which the Congress is working. Muslims have a heritage of being rulers of India. Although the ancestors of some of the people present in this meeting may not have been in important positions in the government, still they are proud of Muslim rule. This is the reason that though we have lost power, we consider ourselves superior to others in this country. Some English statesmen and politicians are trying to prove that now the English government is quite strong and capable of confronting any nation in India, particularly by taking great pains to keep the Muslims in their place. The British feel that Muslims are the only nation which can claim the right to rule India, and therefore the government closely observes Muslim actions. Muslims should try to prove to the British their full loyalty. If, God forbid, we join the Congress, then we would be the first to get in trouble with the government. The objective of the Congress is to urge the British to leave India and to prepare for self-rule, and when the government counters with preventive measures, the major part of its punitive action will be directed against Muslims. As our nation has earned the name of "disruptionist" in the eyes of the English, Hindus are cleverly using our young and educated men for their own purposes by placing them constantly in the forefront of agitation. It has often been observed that despite many intelligent and educated Hindu youths, a Muslim has been made president of a certain public meeting with the intention that if there be any trouble, Muslims would be held responsible.

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72. *Bengali kya kar sakenge . Handi josh Khaegi, to apna ap hi jalaegi.*

Thus listen my Muslim brethren : you should never join the Congress. You should also not fear that Hindu organizations will become strong and then become annoyed with us. Muslims must never join the Congress just to maintain diplomatic relations with Hindus. This Congress is neither a religious organization of Hindus nor is it related to Islam. Since this is not a religious issue, but just a political one, then Hindus should not feel upset and revengeful if Muslims do not join the Congress. There are some Hindu Congressmen who sincerely feel that the Congress is working for the good of Hindus and Muslims as well as for the welfare of the entire country. I would nevertheless request that Muslims be excused from the whole Congress affair because Muslim efforts for the Congress cannot bring any good fruit and ultimately Muslims will be the losers at the hands of Hindus. If Bengalis want to collaborate with Hindus for the goals of the Congress, they are most welcome to do so. At the same time I urge Muslims to take extreme care in avoiding Congress activities. If there is trouble over the Congress, the main scapegoat will be the Muslims. The government will forget that this party was founded by Hindus and Bengalis. Besides that, Bengalis are not courageous enough to fight with a gun or a sword—they are famous for their cowardice. Bengalis are able to talk too much, but they are incapable of fighting. In a time of crisis they will yield to the government, apologize, and put the blame on others. The same is true of Hindus. When they are threatened, they will claim ignorance of any involvement in the Congress. The ultimate result would be the victimization of Muslims and no one else.<sup>73</sup>

I end my speech with one comment—I am not against any nationalist party which works for the rights of the people. Such parties should exist openly. Those "committees", however, should not resemble the Congress. Demands should bear some relationship to our privileges, and they should be placed before the government with great respect. We should not try to arouse trouble with the government by demanding concessions which the British will not give. Since the Congress is working toward that end, if Muslims want to get some of their demands met, they should do it through their own organization. I want to announce good news. We have established a Mohammedan National Congress in Calcutta through the efforts of the Muhammedan National Association for the purpose of presenting

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73. *Harchi shud az Musalman shud.*

Muslim grievances. The Honorable Syed Amir Ali, Barrister-at-Law, member of the Indian Council, is an active member of the organization. He has gone to England to seek concessions for the welfare of the Muslim population in India. Thus Muslims should join their own Congress and submit their demands respectfully through that organization. At the same time I would advise my Hindu brethren that they should work for their rights through their own Congress and leave Muslims alone. The needs of Hindus and Muslims are quite different. Muslims should not join the National Congress and work against the interests of the government and their community.

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The following list of people were present at the public meeting, August 16, 1888, against the National Congress, and they are in full agreement with the contents of the speech :

Sheikh Amir Ali, B.A., Assistant Professor, Government College  
Lahore, and Rais, Gurdaspur  
Sheikh Ali Ahmad, First Class Vakil, Vice-President Gurdaspur  
Municipal Committee  
Syed Hussain Ali Shah, Former Excise Inspector, Rais, Gurdaspur  
Mirza Hayat Beg, Post Office Clerk, Gurdaspur  
Mir Nur-ul-Hussain, Education Department Ahlmad, Gurdaspur  
Munshi Nur Mohammad, Naib Moharar, Education Department,  
Gurdaspur  
Munshi Ghulam Khan, Revenue Department Draftsman, Gurdaspur  
Sheikh Ahmad Bakhsh, Rais, Batala  
Babu Fazal Meran, Clerk, English-Section, D. C. Office, Gurdaspur  
Sheikh Din Mohammad, Munsarim Bandobast, Gurdaspur  
Sheikh Mahdi Hassan, Munsarim Bandobast, Gurdaspur  
Sheikh Ghulam Naqshaband, Khalf-ul-Rashid, Rais  
Sheikh Nabi Baksh Sahib, Lawyer and Vice-President, Gurdaspur  
Congress  
Babu Fazal Illahi, Bengali  
Pandit Labbhu Ram, Agent  
Sheikh Nur Ahmad, Application Writer, Sadr Court  
Sheikh Imam-u-Din, Application Writer, Sadr Court  
Sheikh Mohammad Din, Batala  
Syed Aulad Hussain, Rais  
Syed Sadiq Hussain, Moharrar Committee, Gurdaspur

Syed Safdar Ali Shah, Police Office Clerk, Gurdaspur  
Syed Safdar Shah, Kalanauri  
Sheikh Taj-ud-Din, Moharar Judicial Office, Gurdaspur Tehsil  
Sheikh Mohammad Ibrahim, Appeal Writer, Rais, Gurdaspur  
Munshi Mohammad Abdullah, Naib Sharf, Adaulat Sadr  
Munshi Mohammad Abdul Ghani, Munsarim Bandobast  
Sheikh Alla Din  
Sheikh Karam Illahi, Merchant, Gurdaspur  
Sheikh Badr-ud-Din, Draftsman, Gurdaspur District Board  
Sheikh Mehr Ali, Judicial Office Moharar, Gurdaspur  
Sheikh Sultan Bakhsh, Gurdaspur District Office Moharar  
Sheikh Allah Rakha, Gurdaspur Judicial Office Moharar  
Syed Haider Shah, Rais, Gurdaspur  
Sheikh Fazal Karim, Agent, "Sachi Shop"  
Maulvi Syed Jallal-ud-Din, Moharar-at-large, Gurdaspur  
Sheikh Umar Hayat, Gurdaspur  
Sheikh Rehmat Ali, Registration Office Moharar  
Jinab Kalu Hakim, Rais, Gurdaspur  
Qadi Ali Mohammad Sahib, Rais, Gurdaspur  
Qadi Nizam-ud-Din, Naib Court Inspector, Gurdaspur  
Makhi Khan, Agent and Appeal Writer  
Munshi Fateh-ud-Din, Agent and Appeal Writer  
Qadi Naseer-ud-Din, Munshi and Calligrapher, Gurdaspur  
Syed Hussain Shah, Printer and Publisher, Gurdaspur  
Munshi Meeran Baksh, Agent  
Sheikh Umar Baksh, City Police Jamadar  
Sheikh Qutb-ud-Din, District Office Ahalmad, Gurdaspur

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"MUSLIMS SHOULD KEEP AWAY FROM THE NATIONAL CONGRESS"

The follower of the Prophet and a constant advocate of Muslim welfare, Syed Hashim Shah Bukhari, Ferozepur, would like to inform his brothers that Mr. Ali Mohammad Bhimji is currently touring the Punjab and calling on Punjabis and especially Muslims to join the National Congress. It is not my duty to interfere with or obstruct Mr. Bhimji's personal affairs because we live in a time of liberty and anyone can freely express and publish his thoughts. However, informed Muslims have opposed the Congress since its inception. Even a high-powered committee by the name of the Indian United Patriotic Association, the purpose and objects of which have been

published in newspapers, has been formed by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan Bahadur to rectify the Congress deceptions. Thus, wherever Mr. Bhimji has travelled and lectured, the wise inhabitants of those places have not allowed his ideas to reach the hearts of the masses. He gave a lecture at Ferozepur on November 9th, but since then, by the grace of God (the mental state of Ferozepur Hindus and Muslims being dissimilar from the inhabitants of other Punjab cities), rich and powerful Muslims of the city have boycotted Congress activities. Some of the Muslims attended his lecture only to watch the show. Many were students and teachers, and only a few respectable persons and clerks from the cantonment were present at his show or *tamasha*. Mr. Bhimji did not say anything which needs correction. His speech should be considered a detailed explanation of the goals of the National Congress, goals already challenged by reputable critics. What should be mentioned, however, is that because two respectable Muslims thanked Mr. Bhimji at the end of the meeting, some people have gotten the idea that local Muslims supported the lecture. Such rumours, false claims, and the fears of my brothers that their opinion may be misrepresented has led me to challenge the view that Muslims support the Congress. It is worth mentioning that Ferozepur Muslims, like other Punjabi Muslims, think the Congress is bad not only for themselves but also for the government. For this reason Ferozepur Muslims have no sympathy with the organization and refuse to become partners in its activities. Those two Muslims who gave speeches at the conclusion of the November 9th lecture in no sense reflected Muslim support for the speaker. They only thanked him for travelling all the way to Ferozepur. I was at the meeting from beginning to end and can testify that the two or three gentlemen who heavily supported Bhimji were bustling around trying to persuade several upper-class Muslims to become president of the meeting. When they failed in that maneuver, they made a Hindu Lala president and only succeeded in getting two Muslims to offer thanks. I do not even consider that tactic successful because I heard the speeches of both men and at the most they only gave Bhimji polite accolades, a gesture which cannot be construed as Congress support. That same day I met both Muslims and tried to discover their real opinion. The gentlemen giving the first speech was completely against the Congress. He clearly stated that by thanking Bhimji, neither Muslim meant to support the Congress. If his words had somehow been taken to signify such support, he appealed to me to correct the record.

The orientation of the other gentlemen fluctuated between support and refutation of the Congress. After investigating the matter I am convinced that those speeches cannot be said to reflect Muslim public support. Despite the claims of Congress followers, the actions of these two gentlemen cannot be seen other than polite gestures toward a fellow Muslim. Under no circumstances could only two tongues be thought to represent the thousands of Muslim tongues in Ferozepur. I want my audience to understand that Ferozepur Muslims, like Muslims, in all Punjab cities, do not consider the purposes of the National Congress beneficial for their country and their government. To support this argument, I present to all my Muslim brothers the lecture of Maulana Nazur Ahmed which he gave in Delhi and which appeared in several newspapers. I hope my brothers will read it carefully, understand the evils of the Congress, and hate the organization.

### Lecture

At an anti-Congress meeting on October 15th, the most learned Maulana Hafiz Maulvi Nazur Ahmed (pensioner, Rais, and author) and many others gave such unique, outspoken and impressive lectures in the Delhi town-hall that the entire audience, whether for or against the Congress, realized that the flattering words of the Congress were just designed to deceive men. By the grace of God, Maulvi Nazur Ahmed's high voice was so strong during the lecture that the whole town-hall was echoing.<sup>74</sup> In short, this meeting was worth attending. The rousing speech follows :

I am not used to attending public gatherings because I prefer to spend the last days of my life in a peaceful corner. However, several friends have insisted that I fearlessly express myself on the National Congress in the expectation that Muslims would benefit from hearing my ideas. On hearing the expression "benefit of Muslims" I broke my habit and came without hesitation to be with you. The name "Congress" has been ringing in my ears for over three years, but is it the same with all of the audience? I doubt it. Mr. Bhimji or Maihamji—I am not sure of his name, but whatever he may be—two or three days before his lecture this incident occurred.

74. There is unfortunately no information on the meeting or the featured speakers. The speech (both in style and content) reflects an aristocratic orientation but the Maulvi demonstrates a marked affinity for reform. His ideas on education and Muslim pride are particularly significant.

I and Maulvi Karim Baksh and one other gentleman were sitting on the fountain before the evening prayers when another man appeared with Mr. Bhimji's advertisement and started saying, "what is this thing?" He seemed educated because his finger was on the word "National Congress," but neither could he spell the word nor did he know its meaning. I did not have enough time to talk with him although he thought the National Congress was something like a bawdy show (cheers). In a while I will show that it certainly is a variety of *tamasha* (cheers). I did not happen to attend a Congress meeting, but as far as I can tell from the newspapers and conversations, it seems that English education has silently stirred the hearts of Indians who are preparing for government service and who are going to great pains to win positions. At the same time the government has placed more stress on education than meeting the needs of the country. The consequent result has been a large group of impatient people who want government employment. Certainly it is very difficult for the government, which is famous for its parsimony, to provide this mob with employment. The slow increase of jobs has in this way caused hope to turn into hopelessness, and hopelessness into disaffection. The hearts of such men are hostile towards the government, and their feelings have blinded them to such an extent that they cannot see anything except the drawbacks of British rule. One Arabic poet has correctly said that "Happy and lucky people do not see and think of evil; it is only the dissatisfied and angry people who try to create trouble."

I have so far used the word "National Congress" and will continue to use it in the future only because those people who are its founders and promoters have taken this name for their party. The Indian National Congress continually brags about itself, but any student a little familiar with the history and geography of India will prick up his ears and say, "Where is this India and where is this nationality?" There is no country on the globe as this India. India is in fact a diversity of faiths, rituals, habits and nations. Thus it is an utter delusion to unite these diversified factions and consider them as one nation. There is nothing objectionable as long as Indians think Hindus and Muslims are different nations, but how can that be when Indians now merge the two into one nation and call themselves "Indian nationalists?" The rivers Ganges and Sind can unite, but union is not possible between a Hindu and a Muslim as long as they are Hindus and Muslims (cheers). The stingy attitude of Hindus

toward nationality is seen when a Hindu goes to England and then returns home. Hindus do not like to include such a person in their caste, an example of which there is in this very city. But now look at their mercy and kindheartedness as they pull us in with them into the Congress when we are admittedly from low birth (loud cheers). "I am drowned, but I will take you along to the bottom of the sea." Save me from such a friend. There is something suspicious in this whole business. An incident occurred similar to this during the mutiny of 1857 when Hindus got entangled with the "problem of the cartridges," but Muslims had to suffer along with them. Whatever Congressmen may say, there is clear evidence during every municipal election and religious ceremonies (Muharrum, Dussehra, Holi, and Id) that Hindus and Muslims are two very different elements. The present rulers have tried to unite these elements by force, to unite peoples who temperamentally hate each other (cheers). This is the nature of our India - we cannot remain comfortable and at peace without a foreign government. For generations we tried Hindu as well as Muslim rule, and there is sufficient evidence in our history that these other governments were unable to achieve 1/1000 of the beneficial rule achieved by the British (cheers). Hindu administrators imposed all kinds of hardships on Muslims, and during Muslim rule tyrant kings harassed Indians. In short, it is a decided fact from God that the welfare of India rests solely on the ability of a foreign ruler to preside over the subcontinent and be neither Hindu nor Muslim. Such a ruler must therefore come from the kingdoms of Europe, and who in the kingdoms of Europe did not have a strong desire to control India? The French, Portuguese, Dutch—all made efforts to win her. Within the Russian nobility this burning desire was alive even from the time of Peter the Great and has been handed down from generation to generation. It was the will of God, however, that the English became the rulers of India (cheers). Having ruled India for 125 years they have demonstrated to everyone their national intelligence, maturity, industry, prudence, justice, and bravery. Is it then possible that any just, intelligent nationalist will feel in his heart that the government should be changed? Say all, no, no (cheers). I believe that even if there is a Congressman in this audience, he will say nothing but no. But it is not enough to say "no" only as a show. Prove it by your character and talk that you do not want a change in government. Many gentlemen among you have read in the newspapers that Russia is melancholy because



she has not taken India. Russia will hear the propaganda of the Congress.<sup>75</sup> In fact, she has probably heard it because we live in an era in which whatever you say at home is carried by news media to other countries in the world. It is not necessary for hundreds and thousands of people to cry out in Congress meetings because Congress proclamations, announcements, and the beat of the drum are made in such a way that the Congress pictures itself as the "Bible" of the Indian people and spokesman of their opinion. Magazines, articles and advertisements convey this same message. Well, after hearing this propaganda, what might the Russians think? The same thing that a common man would think, namely, from one tip of India to the other, people are dissatisfied with the government. A second inference is that Indians would like to see a change of government. What impression will this thought have on the Russian mind? They will become mad with joy and begin futile campaigns. Whatever Russia hoped to do tomorrow, she will try today. Alas, the Congressmen do not consider the unhealthy effects of their wrong doings.

The relationship between a government and its subjects is similar to that of a father with his son or a teacher with his pupil or a doctor with his patient. But the enjoyment of these relationships is dependent upon the faithfulness of the dependant toward the person who fulfills his requirements. Fulfilment is not possible until the dependant places himself entirely in the hands of the giver. If a son in his rearing or a patient in his treatment or a pupil in his education interferes with his adviser, then it is natural that the father, doctor and teacher will give up their responsibilities and begin reducing their patronage. In a similar fashion, will not the actions of the Congress be harmful to us? It is and certainly will be (cheers). If we look over the past deeds of the British, we find that this government is progressive. The government is not stagnant and immovable, but day by day the British progress toward betterment, reforms, justice, and great deeds. Because we ourselves are in a transitive and progressive condition, the government should also be transitive and progressive. One does not have to go far to compare the conditions which exist today and those existing at the time of the 1857 mutiny. You see that this is like the difference between darkness and light. Now

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75. The continual reference in both tracts to Russia and the threatening Russian invasion suggest that foreign affairs interested Indians far more than has been commonly supposed. The subject should receive detailed study.

what if we ask who visualized and invented systems like the railways, telegraph, Department of Education, money orders, parcel post, municipalities, roads, cleanliness, canals, sea travel, police, freedom of the press, exhibitions, dispensing of justice, rules, formulas and the participation of Indians on councils, honorary titles, expansion in trade and business? If you want to count the gifts of God you will loose count. No sooner does the Congress appear than it wants to rule you. Nobody would have anticipated such a development. Stick fast to your faith and don't give way to pressure. The British who have done so much for you can do a lot more if and only if you don't stand in their path and prevent them from continuing to help you (cheers). The Congress has many flattering words which they manipulate to prevent objections from being made to their program. We however, look at actual events and happenings. The foundation of Congress theory rests on the argument that if the present rulers are not unaware of the necessities of their subjects, then they are at least selfish and unjust. I cannot believe that any noble person who does not lie will join those people who put forth useless and unreasonable charges (no, no, no). Twelve years have passed since I had official connection with the government, but I still carry some of the privileges given me by that government. The British educated me, gave me status and a job, and I am one of their subjects. I was not and am not a puppet of the British. I know that there are many British administrative rules which require reform.

The British government is a human government, and to err is human. To criticize the government is not disaffection, but there are proper methods of criticism. Does not the Congress feel content that everyone has the freedom to express themselves through newspapers? Many large cities have committees, councils, societies and officers who, while travelling and on vacation, are always alert and inquiring. Even members of the House of Commons and Parliament come over to inquire, and those people who have contacts with officials always have the opportunity to complain and convey the troubles of the people to the rulers. I do not understand this new approach of the Congress, I do not understand why there should be a general outcry against the government. Those people who are peacefully busy with their work may feel astonished and ask "what kind of calamity has occurred that there should be such a disturbance?"

Moreover, the Congress does not keep this thought in mind. The English feel foreign in our company. They talk of distinctions between

conqueror and conquered and say that water and oil do not mix. If this is a common belief, then what should our relationship be with the English people? You should show faithfulness, obedience, and righteousness toward officials and make them happy so that they continue to provide facilities and kindness to Indians. I don't know what kind of feelings the government has toward the Congress, but my mind says, and I think it is an open secret, that this Congress is considered an enemy in the eyes of British officials. The Congress should be hated. What mild affable, burden-bearing, and dignified person would permit his linen to be washed in public places and public gatherings? And now, who is washing the British linen in public? Their own subjects, dependants, the people under their subjugation (cheers).

The government has had few occasions to test our good intentions because thus far it has ruled solely on the basis of its own power. The British give great consideration to the happiness of their subjects and try to keep them agreeable. It is clear, however, that the government does not fully trust Indians. Is this intuition of untrustworthiness a mistake? No. We have provided no foundation on which confidence could build. Indians lost much British confidence in the 1857 Mutiny. If they had any shame, self-respect, and any intelligence, Indians would have remained quiet for at least fifty years after the Mutiny. But now they have written in newspapers and shouted in meetings, and the limit of criticism has been reached with the creation of the Congress.

At least the rich have performed good acts by helping British government with money, troops, and support when they heard of Russian advances. In the old days British newspapers in England were praising the loyalty of India. I have heard that Englishmen were very delighted by the help. After this show of loyalty, the Congress was created in Bengal, and whatever was done to create goodwill was washed away. Again we have become unreliable.

I have another reason for not trusting the National Congress—suppose by chance the Congress succeeds in bringing reforms to the country for the welfare of Indians. Those reforms will consist only of reductions in the salt tax, the right to carry arms, induction of Indians into a volunteer army, abolition of income taxes, and last but not least, Hindustanis (that is, Bengalis) becoming collectors. Will such actions or other similar reforms bring more wealth to India? Oh stupid men, the techniques for building up the country are quite

different. First, keep yourselves away from ritual, communal feelings, and then secure education. By education I do not mean that education which permits a man to become an M.A. or starts him thinking about the Congress (cheers), but that engineering, medicine, botany, chemistry, physics, geology, etc., by which the power for technical and vocational invention is achieved. Our friend Shams-ul-Ulama Khan Bahadur Mohammed Zaka-Ullah can give us the details of this education very well.<sup>76</sup> Everything is in your soil and in your hand, but you have not reaped advantage from it. You do not care much for what you should or can do because your criticizing of the government leaves no time. If the Bengalis or Parsis or whoever favours the Congress had fully met their responsibilities, then we would have believed that the National Congress stands for the welfare of the country. If any man forgets the necessities of life and goes for luxuries, we cannot accept his righteousness (cheers). If God has placed a defect in a person's mind so that he gets a little education, thinks himself the Bismarck of India, and starts expressing views on important matters of administration as though this were an ordinary arrangement, then let him think and comprehend that way. I believe that those who know how to run the affairs of the country should run the country, and those who do not should sit in a corner without wasting their brains (cheers). It is true that the type of agitation which the Congress wants frequently occurs in England, but one must not think of India as England. The English people's ability, knowledge, intelligence, honesty, discipline, high goals, determination, hard work, sacrifice—we are not like them. If only a few of these virtues were found among Indians, we could have a Congress in the morning and another in the evening, and for both my eyes would be bright and my heart happy. The mistake of the Congress is that it overestimates itself. Congressmen also make the same mistake about the government. When Lord Dufferin toured Karachi, the honourable men of Karachi gathered around him and asked for a railroad through the town. Lord Dufferin got rid of them by saying that he could make promises but there was a possibility that he might find the same needs in Calcutta which overweighed the needs in Karachi. The men of Karachi were involved in only one area, but the government necessarily looks at all of India. Someone once said "think as much

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76. Although it is likely that this Muslim was connected with the Delhi Anjuman or its educational program, no biographical information is available.

as you can do," and that should apply to the condition of the Congress and the government. I have never seen a new proposal presented in the Congress. The same old talk which we read in the newspaper is found there. Congressmen are selfish. Selfish and mad (cheers). Their opinion is selfish, but the opinion of the British is just the opposite. The British must also keep an eye on political strategy. In short, the two opponents have two different statuses, and while there is a difference of status, differences of opinion cannot be removed. Why should we base differences on futile desires? Our belief is that the government will not be forced to meet Congress demands. Suppose in a few things the government is entirely wrong, even then do you not think that it is our duty to accept orders faithfully because of countless favours?

I have thus far made general points about the shortcomings of the Congress, trying to remember that after me more people will talk and express opinions far better than myself. In closing I would like to say that if joining the Congress is harmful to Hindus, then for Muslims it is fatal (cheers). When we compare our condition with the Hindus from any angle, only the Hindu side of the balance is down. First, they are more numerous because they were the original inhabitants and we had to leave our homes to rule the country. We fought and triumphed. For our bad luck, we stayed here (cheers). A few of us were then enough for all Hindus, but now we are burdened with a feeling of helplessness. People call us victims of bad luck, but I regard that as undue despair. As prideful rulers of India, we had the ability to rule and therefore did not cultivate separate livelihoods. Now all we have left is ability. Before progressing, we should determine the meanings of ability. If we mean by ability the standard of education which permits us to get a degree or diploma, then certainly Hindus are ahead of Muslims. Whenever we look over the B. A. and M. A. lists, we find clusters of Hindus and hardly any Muslims. In my eyes, however, this ability has no real value. Despite the fact that I have never read English, I had a chance to discuss many things with degree-holders. I do not say this in way of self-praise, but I had a much better understanding of history and life than the others. Ability is really a name for the capability of men to understand matters and to focus attention on problems which they can handle. In England a man can become "able" by reaching the B.A. or M.A. level because his mother tongue is English and because English society is a big

teacher. It is different here—our national language is not comparable with English and social traditions are unspeakable. This is the reason that our degree-holders can achieve no value and no honored place in our eyes. They lack moral courage, they lack social position. We respect these men only because it is easier for them to get a job. I said earlier that some administrative affairs require reform. One of these important matters is a re-evaluation of the standard of ability. Relying upon their past experience, the British accepted the argument that a University degree should be taken as a mark of one's ability. This has shaken and transformed our society. Those people who are from the low strata of society have risen to high positions after completing their University degrees. There has now developed a strange struggle between their new authority and their old social position. Muslim versus Hindus. In number, in wealth we are not insignificant but our main fault seems to be our inability to use the English language. On this point friends and foes alike have given Muslim such a hard time that I need say nothing more. It is clear, however, that Muslims are disabled in this particular area. The subjugation of Hindus for thousands of years threw them to such low levels that they have lost any sense of honor. They possess no religion, literature, or knowledge in which to take pride. I don't mean to say that they never had these things. They had them, and in a very refined way, but subjugation has now spoiled all that greatness. People say that power and influence is very bad. I say subjugation is a hundred times worse (cheers) Under Muslim rule Hindus used to learn our language, our science, follow our methods, festivals, and even used to worship our elders. When the English came, Hindus did not have any assets and they began to mimic the new rulers. Our trouble was that we possess a religion that is robust, strong, and vital (cheers). Even the hurricanes and revolutions of the world can not push aside this religion. We have a literature which once shook the world. That is consolation to our hearts, energy to our life, light to our eyes, and exhilaration to our souls. We have sciences, many of which have been borrowed by the English, and those sciences still exist (cheers). If we tolerate things a bit longer, we will remain helpless in our habits and lethargy. But is this the only reason why we are considered illiterate, our lack of English? Use of English is not equivalent to authority and power. My experience in life suggests Hindus can never execute authority like Muslims (cheers). This is because the main conditions of authority are self-restraint, pride, force of character, ambition,

and courage. The warmth of these virtues is still in the Muslim blood. In short, our case is a special one. The Muslim tale does not resemble the Hindu tale. When Hindus insist on learning English and taking over the government, their actions will harm us. If you want my advice, neither cry nor leave everything to God and sit quietly—get to work and meet the needs of the Muslim community.

The Congress has certainly woken the government because not a day passes when there is no amendment in the standard of ability. I do not say that English education should be slowed down, but Indians should be given education oriented to social reform, local improvements, etc., things for which the country can receive benefit rather than education which inculcates such ideas that the state has to work hard to keep them quiet (cheers). Whatever may be the ultimate result of the Congress, our pride does not permit us to seek material goals, however big they may be, as a parasite of the organization. Whatever benefits we may get by following this policy we will accept from Queen Victoria, from the Viceroy, from the Lieutenant-Governor, and by the grace of God, we shall get these benefits without begging. Have you not heard, "without asking, receive pearls, and by asking, not even alms?" Muslims should therefore stay away from the Congress.

**Poem read by five Muslim boys at the October 15, 1888, Delhi meeting addressed by Maulvi Nazur Ahmed**

The times are praising the Queen,  
All in the world are happy,  
Whether one is a child, old or young,  
Whether one is strong, helpless, or weak.  
Refrain : Everyone pray this to God :  
Oh God, long live Victoria.  
In every heart is love for her,  
On every tongue is praise for her.  
Her government is a cloud of mercy,  
Her affection is more than that of a mother.  
She respects her well-wishers,  
She is generous to coloured and white.  
She treats everyone equally,  
Whether a Queen of subjects or a mother.

She is making illiteracy disappear,  
She is the promoter of knowledge.

She is the saver from War,  
She is the teacher of compromise.

Since she is the ruler of India,  
People have become more brave.

Neither is there fear of life in desert and mountains,  
Nor a danger of thieves on the road.

Everyone pray this to God :  
Oh God, long life to Victoria.



**Punjab Politics\***  
by 'A Punjabee'  
[MIAN SIR FAZL-I-HUSAIN]  
[February 1936]

**A — FACTS AND FICTIONS**

**Introductory.**

According to the last census in the Punjab, Muslims are nearly 57 per cent., Hindus 28 and Sikhs 13 per cent. and the non-Muslim Press in the Punjab is never tired of firstly preaching the obligations of the majority towards the minority, and secondly expressing fears as to what the fate of the minorities may be, in case the majority secured a position of predominance in the reformed Government of the future. During the last fifteen years or so the Hindu-cum-Sikh Press has been most vociferous in giving expression to their dismay and despair, at the way in which non-Muslim interests have been sacrificed and Muslims have been favoured by Government. Favouritism of a community is not easy to define, but in India it can only mean either giving undue representation in services, or in local self-government, or in grant of lands, jagirs or even titles. There is no other way in which a Government can show favouritism to an individual or a community. It should further be noticed that the impression conveyed to an outsider by the ravings of the Hindu-cum Sikh Press

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\*The paper carried on the back of its title-page the following foreword :

"This is a discourse by a Punjabi Muslim on Punjab Politics. It contains facts and figures which will help the public to see the political situation in the province in its true perspective and suggest a true basis for the foundation of future political parties and for their programmes.

RAHIM BAKSH"

For the actual authorship of the paper, the occasion for its distribution—on the day following the meeting of the Executive Board of the All-India Muslim Conference at Delhi in February 1936 under the presidentship of the Agha Khan—and the reaction of the non-Muslim press thereto, see Azim Husain (son of Mian Sir Fazl-i-Husain)'s book *Fazl-i-Husain: A Political Biography* (published by Longmans, Green & Co., Bombay, 1946), pp. 302-05. — G. S.

of the Punjab is that the British Government has been favouring the flattering Muslims as against the nationalist Hindus and Sikhs of the Punjab and that in consequence, whether in public service or in local bodies or in the grant of lands, jagirs or honorary distinctions, Muslims have been given much more than their majority justified and in consequence the non-Muslim minorities have been unjustly and ruthlessly denied their rights.

Having stated what the complaints of the Hindu and Sikh minorities could possibly be, it would be as well to examine what the facts actually are.

Facts pre 1890, and the result of Bureaucracy's favouritism from 1890 to 1920

2. It is believed that in the pre-mutiny British period, the administration was run by those who were already in the old administration and strange as it may sound the representation of Muslims in public services was fairly good. In fact it is definitely known that so far as the imparting of education is concerned, the Muslim representation was in excess of their population basis. Subsequent to the mutiny, however, it appears that the Muslim representation in services began to deteriorate, and went on deteriorating for about 20 to 25 years and had reached the lowest limit, when a few far-seeing British officers realised that the administration was rapidly passing into Hindu hands. It was in the eighties that the British Government realised that the Muslim element in the administration had become very small and since then it had been the British Government's policy to make declarations to the effect that they were for helping the Muslims educationally, and that as soon as they were fit by virtue of their education they would be given their due share in the administration of the country. The Aligarh movement, the Congress, the British Government's declarations of policy to help the Muslims were making progress during the nineties. Towards the end of the first decade of the 20th century, the educated young Muslims realised that Government declarations meant nothing, that the authorities said a great deal but did little and the politically-minded amongst them started the Muslim League. What was the effect of the British Government's policy on the Muslim representation in the services, in the Punjab before the introduction of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms in 1921? The bureaucracy had more than thirty years wherein to show the result of this policy of the proclaimed Muslim favouritism. On the eve of reforms the position in the public services was far from

satisfactory. Barring the lowest section of two departments, in all the departments their representation was very small, about 33 per cent. In other words, on an average the representation of the minority community was about 33 per cent, while the majorities had the remaining 67 per cent to themselves. This is the net result of the favouritism, extending over one generation, shown by the bureaucracy to the Muslims of the Punjab. The usual explanation of want of education among the Muslims has been examined and rejected many a time. It is one of the fictions which have been proved to be fictions but are so perseveringly persisted in that they continue to live. Is it that the Hindus and Sikhs who find employment in Government offices are better qualified, as a rule, than the Muslims available? Nothing of the kind. Why? Even among Hindus and Sikhs it is not merit that is the passport to Government offices, but favouritism and nepotism of the men round about the posts which fall vacant. It is the old principle of 'have-gots' getting more and 'have-nots' being deprived of what little they may have. The bureaucracy's effort, if an effort was made, failed miserably in the Punjab.

It may be said that that might have been the condition in 1920, but fifteen years of diarchy have revolutionised the position; the Muslim Ministers and members of the cabinet dominated the situation, made good all the deficiency and that is what made the poor Hindus and Sikhs groan and become apprehensive as to the future wherein Muslim majority may be a predominant factor in reformed cabinet.

3. Let us again examine facts. In 1926 the Punjab Government agreed to publish every year a consolidated statement showing the proportionate representation of the various communities serving in the different departments of the Punjab Government, and as it publishes this statement on the 1st January of each year, the Muslim position on the 1st January 1935 will show whether there is or there is not justification for the Hindus and Sikhs to groan and call every fairminded Indian and Britisher to bear witness to the injustice and inequality to which they have been subjected under the Montagu reforms, to save them from the approaching calamity of a Muslim predominance in the reformed cabinet of the future. It would be best to take departments seriatim

Firstly, the Reserved Departments. In the Punjab Civil Service, Executive Branch, Muslim representation stands at 44.5 per cent. and

Facts re. Services,  
1921-1934.

(a) Reserved departments. No appreciable improvement in Muslim proportion.

in the Judicial Branch at 34.7. The Police Department is supposed to be the monopoly of the Muslims, but amongst the Inspectors their representation is only 38.4 as against 38.4 Hindus and Sikhs. Amongst Sub-Inspectors the Muslims have their population basis and amongst Assistant-Sub-Inspectors and head constables they are in excess of their population basis.

Coming to the P.W.D. Irrigation Branch, Muslim representation in the Punjab Engineering Service is 18 as against 66 of Hindus and Sikhs. Amongst Sub-Engineers 12.5 per cent, as against 87.5 of Hindus, amongst the Subordinate Engineering Service 29.5 per cent. as against 70.5 of Hindus and Sikhs. What a wonderful story of Muslim predominance in all services! When we come to head clerks and clerks of which there are as many as 648, Muslim representation is 36.4, against 62.8 of the Hindus and Sikhs. Amongst the signallers of whom the number is 485, their representation is only 35 per cent. When we come to Patwaries of whom the number is 2,968, the Muslim representation is only 38.2 as if suitable Muslims cannot be found for being Patwaries in the Irrigation Branch. And this is the condition of a department which has been under a Muslim Member from 1926 to 1936. What an eloquent testimony of Muslim favouritism. One is astonished at the hue and cry raised in the non-Muslim Punjab Press as to Muslim favouritism when one sees that in a department which employs thousands of persons, most of them of low qualifications, the Muslim representation is so very small and this is in spite of the fact that the department has been under Muslim Members for ten years. Let us now turn to the Forest Department. There in the Provincial Service, Extra Assistant Conservators of Forests, Muslim representation is 17.4 per cent. as against 47.8 of Hindus and 34.8 of Sikhs. It is only in the Land Revenue Department that Muslim representation is nearly 50 per cent. There are 9,270 Patwaries of whom 49 per cent. are Muslims. It is not strange that the Revenue Department should be able to find 49 per cent. of Muslims Patwaries when their requirement is as large as 9,270, but the Irrigation Department should not be able to find more than 37 per cent. Muslims for their smaller requirement of 2,968?

In the Law Department the representation is nearly one-third. When we come to the Jail Department, Muslim representation in the higher ranks is low, and it is only in the case of head warders that they exceed their population basis. In the High Court Muslim representation among clerks is 37.1 per cent. but why complain of that when

in the Punjab Civil Secretariat it is even less. Just imagine, the fountain head of Muslim favouritism, the Punjab Civil Secretariat, in the year 1935, after 15 years' predominance of Muslim influence in H.E. the Governor's cabinet showing 37 per cent. Muslim representation. What a marvellous achievement! It seems to one that if things continue in the reformed Government of the future with Muslim predominance, as in the past, Muslim representation might well come down to 25 per cent. In the offices near the Punjab Civil Secretariat, i.e., the Financial Commissioner's Office, we find again Muslim representation is 37 per cent. This again in spite of the fact that the Revenue Members since 1926 have been Muslims. In the District Subordinate Service as many as 2,729 are employed. In the whole of the Punjab, Muslim representation is 47.4 per cent. Not bad, considering the position elsewhere, but certainly well below half. This finishes the Reserved Departments.

The net result of the survey made above is that the Muslim representation in the Reserved Departments is very poor in higher grades and is in excess of its population basis in the case of head constables and head warders. Excluding head constables and head warders the representation is below 40 per cent. and this after 15 years of reformed Government. It might be said that the Reserved Departments are Reserved Departments, and things are quite different in the case of Transferred Departments, and it is there that the Hindus and Sikhs have suffered. Let us, therefore, proceed to examine the Transferred Departments.

4. Starting with the Ministry of Agriculture we find that in the Provincial Agricultural Service Class I, there is no Muslim; that in the Subordinate Service, amongst Agricultural Assistants their representation is 33 per cent. while among Mukadams (of lower status than head warders) their representation is 66. In the Veterinary Department their representation works out to about 45 per cent. and in the Co-operative Department it approaches the population basis. But when we come to the P.W.D., we find that in the special posts—27 in number—Muslims are only 7.4 per cent., in the case of Provincial Service only 11.8 per cent., in the case of Sub-Engineers only 16.5 per cent., and in the cadre of Upper and Lower Subordinates and S.E.S. not more than 33 per cent. Even amongst the clerks they are only 36 per cent. Nothing in the domain

of the Ministry of Agriculture to justify Hindus and Sikh groanings. On the other hand, it can reasonably be said that the Muslims are very poorly represented in P.W.D., and poorly in the Agricultural Department. It might be urged that the Agricultural Department has been always under the administration of a Hindu or a Sikh Minister and that is why Hindu and Sikh rights have not been trampled under foot. Let us turn to the Ministry of Education which has been in the charge of a Muslim from the very beginning excepting for one term of three years or so. Firstly, the Education Department.

Muslim representation in the special posts is (ii) Ministry of Education 11.1 per cent. against 11.1 per cent. of Hindus —Majority below 40— and 22.2 others, while the European Minorities above 60. element is 55.6 per cent. In the Punjab Educational Service, Men's Branch, Class 2, there are 111 posts. Muslim representation is only 36.2 as against the Hindu and Sikh representation of 57.1. In the Subordinate Educational Service, Anglo-Vernacular Section, which has a cadre of 988, Muslim representation is only 38.9 as against Hindu and Sikh representation of 60.1. What alarming figures! This is the department which has been for 11 out of the last 15 years under Muslim Ministers, and throughout the department Muslim representation is round about 40, while in the upper ranks it is round about 35.

Let us now turn to the second department under successive Muslim Ministers—Medical Muslim representation amongst Civil Surgeons is 22 per cent, Medical-Majority below 30. Civil Assistant Surgeons 27 per cent. and Sub-Minority above 70. Assistant Surgeons 22.8 per cent. In the case of dispensers it is 32.9 per cent and in the total it is only 25 per cent. Here again is a department which has been for 11 or 12 years under Muslim Ministers and it commands 25 per cent. representation for a majority community of 57 per cent. What a wonderful justification for the minorities to raise the hue and cry that they have been raising during the last 15 years. In the Public Health Department the representation remains well below 40 per cent and this because it is in the charge of the Minister of Education. When we come to the Ministry of Local Self-Government the same tale is repeated as in the case of the Ministry of (iii) Ministry of Local Self-Government Agriculture, while in the Registration Department where Muslim representation is 44.2,

every effort is made not to let it go up even to 50 per cent. not to speak of 56 per cent. and to raise the Hindu representation without touching the Sikh representation which stands at present at 32.7 per cent. This is the department which, for a number of years, was also under Muslim Ministers.

5. This completes the survey of the services of the Punjab Administration. What is the bird's-eye-view of the situation? It is this: The departments which have been under the Muslim Ministers show very poor Muslim percentage. The departments which have been under non-

Muslim Ministers show very high Hindu and Sikh percentage and very low Muslim percentages. One wonders in view of these facts—facts brought out by Government publications and brought out not once only but once every year, and published every year since the last ten years—what have the successive Governments been doing in the matter? Nothing, except that they have been cowed down by the circulation of misrepresentations which, if rightly named, would be called lies. Instead of the Government issuing an authoritative statement to the effect that these allegations are absolutely unfounded and untrue and quoting chapter and verse from each department, in particular the departments of Muslim Ministers, they have been watching, no doubt impartially, the working of the reforms, the falsehoods finding general currency and taking no steps to mitigate the evil. Why had nothing been done by those who were in authority and in a position to know what the evil was?

<p>Possible Explanation for the Hindu-Sikh Press Propaganda</p> <p>No improvement worth mentioning in Muslim representation</p>	<p>It might be said that it is all very well to wax eloquent on the poor figures in the departments of Muslim Ministers and try to make out that they have done no harm to Hindus and Sikhs during their time. But may be they have done a great deal of harm and raised tremendously the percentages which were very, very low in the departments when they took them over, and thus during the last 15 years have perpetrated innumerable acts of injustice and inequity to the detriment of Hindus and Sikhs. Well, there is logic behind this argument. The published consolidated statement which can be compared with that of January 1935 is one which was published on the 1st January 1927. There was one prior to it in 1926. There is no such statement</p>
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before 1926. It appears that during the last 8 years comparing the figures of January 1927 with those of January 1935, the position has in no way improved and, indeed, in some cases, it has actually deteriorated. The fountain-head of the so-called favouritism, H. E. the Governor of the Punjab, who is responsible for the recruitment to the executive branch of the Provincial Civil Service, has let the Muslim representation which was 44.5 in 1927 be 44.15 in 1934. What a signal proof of sympathy with loyal Muslims during the eight years of favouritism ! Can one say that during this period brilliant Muslims were not forthcoming ? Can it be said that in the Provincial Executive Service Muslim element is not head and shoulders above non-Muslim element ? Have they not distinguished themselves in executive work, in settlement work, in every branch in which they have been tried ? That they may do, but H. E. the Governor is bound to be influenced by the public press, and the public press, mainly Hindu and Sikh, raises a hue and cry and H. E. assured of the loyalty of the Muslims and the support of the Muslim Members of the Cabinet can well afford to appease the Hindus and Sikhs by giving them more nominations than they are entitled to, and satisfies his Muslim friends with promises to materialise in the future. In the Financial Commissioner's office in 1927 the Muslim representation stood at 42, and in honour of the Revenue Member being a Muslim since then up to 1935 the representation went down to 41. What an eloquent testimony to a Muslim Member pushing the Muslim representation so strongly ! Similarly, in the Forest Department which is also under the Revenue Member, Muslim representation of 20 went down to 17.4. In the Irrigation Branch there is no improvement to speak of. Under the Ministry of Agriculture the percentage of Muslim Agricultural Assistants fell further. In the P.W.D., where Muslim representation was already poor, it fell still further. In the Education Department there was no rise to speak of. Therefore, a comparison of the statements of 1st January 1927 and 1935 establishes, beyond a shadow of doubt, that during the period the advance has been very little. If there is advance in one branch there has been deterioration in the other and the net result is no advance. What, then, one may ask, is the justification for all the agitation that has been carried on during the last 15 years ? When men in authority make speeches they appeal to the Muslim community in the Punjab to realise their responsibility and win the confidence of the minority. They do not say how that confidence is to be won. Do they suggest that Muslims should forgo



their claim to representation in services? Do they really suggest

Conclusion : that to satisfy the minorities the Muslims  
In services no justification for Hindu Sikh complaints should submit to being depressed? It is astonishing how fictions so successfully displace facts, that no one takes the trouble to look at facts and fictions pass for facts.

6. Next, it may be that Hindu-cum-Sikh agitation is not due to 'Services' but to the injustice done to them

Has any injustice been done to Hindus and Sikhs in Local Self-Government? in Local Self-Government. This Department was under a Muslim Minister for five years, and after an interval of a year or so was again in charge of a Muslim Minister for three years and has since been under a Hindu Minister. In order to have a clear conception of the issues involved, it would be best first to state what the position was on the eve of the introduction of the Montagu reforms,

No 1. enlargement of scope of communalism in Local Self-Government since 1921.

of the introduction of the Montagu reforms, what changes were introduced by the first Muslim Minister in charge of it, and whether those changes were as alleged by the Hindu and Sikh critics, intensely communal, poisoning the Local Self-Government with the virus of communalism, or on the other hand, were measures of reforms in accordance with the Liberal and the Congress programme. Before the introduction of the Montagu reforms the local bodies in the Punjab were of two kinds. Firstly, the District Boards wherein the electorates were joint, but there were some District Boards which were entirely nominated and some which were largely nominated and in all, the official element was considerable, and to all intents and purposes the District Boards could scarcely be said to be self-government institutions. The second category of Local bodies consisted of municipalities wherein franchise was high, the nominated element very considerable and the official element considerable. Each district had a District Board and the total number of municipalities in the Punjab was about 110. There were also a few Notified Area Committees which were nominated bodies. In half the municipalities, joint-electoralates obtained while in the other half separate electoralates prevailed. What was the condition of the Muslim representation in these bodies? Very poor and very unfair. In the District Boards, as a rule, constituencies were so framed that Muslim voters did not preponderate in as many constituencies as their voting strength would have justified. That is to say, there was gerrymandering in the for-

mation of constituencies.

The position of the municipalities was even worse. In many cases where joint-electoralates prevailed a large number of Muslim voters were locked up in one or two constituencies, while constituencies wherein Hindu voters predominated were small, i.e., had a smaller number of voters in them. To give an example, while in one constituency there were as many as 1,000 voters, in another there were less than 300, and it so happened that the constituency with less than 300 voters had a very large preponderance of Hindu voters while the one with one thousand voters had Muslim voters in it. Thus, this gerrymandering resulted in municipalities with joint-electoralates, in spite of the proportion of three Muslim voters to one Hindu voter, having a set of constituencies in half of which Hindu voters preponderated over the Muslim voters. Again, the franchise was high and thus the proportion of Muslim voters to Hindu voters was definitely prejudicial to Muslim representation being anything like adequate. These evils cried loudly for reform. If the bureaucracy had attached any importance to Local Self-Government these evils could not have existed, but the bureaucracy believed in efficiency, in maintaining law and order in dealing with manifestations of sedition, political offences, collection of land revenue and taxes, and such petty things as Local Self-Government or education for which there was not enough time. They could be attended to when there was time.

The Muslim Minister proceeded to carry out a liberal programme of reform. Firstly, he passed the Panchayat Act, in which and in the rules framed under it there is neither directly nor indirectly any tinge of communalism. This Act is of the same kind as the C. P. Panchayat Act, or the Madras Act, but simply because it was a measure which was likely to save the rural classes from the domination of the money-lender and the petty official, the urban Hindus and Sikhs violently opposed it. The bureaucracy was not very helpful—a sort of beneficent neutrality—and even this, on account of the political situation of the time, and it was not till two or three years after the passing of the Act, that the Punjab Government agreed to give the measure a fair chance. It is believed to have done a great deal of good, but curiously enough, this was one of the first to fall a victim to the retrenchment zeal of the Government.

Then the Muslim Minister passed a Small Town Committees'

Act. This again was solely a Local Self-Government measure which was absolutely noncommunal. The electorates are joint, the elected element is very large—over 80 per cent., the nominated element is very small, restricted on an average to one non-official nomination. The franchise is low and it can be very well said that these two measures, the Panchayat Act and the Small Town Committees' Act have very considerably broadened the basis of Local Self-Government for rural and urban areas.

Now as to the reforms, in the then existing legislation relating to District Boards and Municipalities amending Reforms in the al- bills were introduced and passed. In both ready existing local these institutions elected element was in- bodies creased, the official element very much reduced and in actual planning of constituencies one uniform principle was observed. The District Boards continued to retain their joint-electories and the municipalities which had separate electories continued to retain them, and the municipalities which had joint-electories continued to retain their joint-electories. This is the whole story of the Local Self-Government under the first few years of the reformed Government. One is astonished at the hue and cry raised against communalism having been introduced into it. It is astonishing how absolutely unfounded allegations can in these days of press propaganda, gain currency and credence, and how fictions displace facts. A fair minded person, when presented with these facts, looks suspicious and asks why, if these were the facts, they were not brought out? Why were fictions allowed to displace these facts? When he is told that these facts were brought out year after year in annual administration reports of the Department of Local Self-Government, that annual reviews were issued, that all these matters formed the subject-matter of interpellations in the Legislative Council and answers were given and published, he is then a bit confused as he is unwilling to recognise the powers of the press for mischief.

To sum up, in the matter of Local Self-Government during the reformed period, nothing has been done which could in any way be called communal. In fact Summary the Liberal or Congress programme of reform has been carried out in the spirit in which the Liberals and the Congress people had conceived it, and in actual administration glaring evils and injustices have been put right with the result that some non-

Muslims were displaced by Muslims, but the percentage cannot be more than 10, for even now the non-official Muslim representation in the local bodies is not in excess of 50 per cent.

7. Thirdly, the question of grants and honours. Grants cover grants of colony lands and Jagirs. As to Grants of land and colony lands, they need not detain us even Jagirs for a few minutes in view of the economic conditions prevailing since the last 8 years.

Irrespective of this phase of the problem, the grants to Muslims were not in excess of those to non-Muslims. As regards jagirs, again till 1927 the grant of jagirs to Muslims was definitely much less than the grant to non-Muslims and some very peculiar reasons were adduced in support of it. Since 1927 the grants to Muslims and others have been half and half. There again no unfairness can be pointed out.

8. Some people are inclined to attach some importance to honours, while others take a more democratic view and attach no importance whatsoever to them. Titles Without discussing the respective merits of these views, it will be enough here to say that even in this matter, Muslims representation is considerably below 50 per cent.

9. Let the position now be summed. The Muslim representation in services in the higher ranks is less than one-third, in the middle ranks round about 40 per cent., and in the lowest ranks well below 50 per cent., except in the case of head constables and head warders and mukaddams, that as against Muslims preponderance in these three lowest grade posts in the list, the non-Muslim preponderance amongst Patwaries, signallers, artificers, sub-overseers, clerks more than counterbalances this excess, and, on the whole it can be said that in the administration the Muslim representation is much less than 50 per cent. and scarcely in excess of 40 per cent., and that Hindu and Sikh representation instead of being slightly above 40 per cent. has, if anything, gone above 60 per cent. As to Local Self-Government the Muslim representation is below 50 per cent. As to grants it is again below 50 per cent.

Is it then that during the last 15 years political position in the Punjab has remained what it was before the introduction of reforms? The reply to this What then is the hue and cry due to ? question is definitely in the negative. Under

the purely bureaucratic Government the non-Muslim communities dominated the situation and virtually ruled the province in the name of the bureaucracy, and the bureaucracy were over and over again approached by the Muslims for justice and invariably repulsed with the cold insulting reply: "we are holding the balance even; you are backward; nothing can be done for you; we are trying to educate you." And provisional, conditional, problematic promises of half a dozen scholarships of the value of Rs 5 per mensem, tenable in backward districts for Muslims in penurious conditions were held out. Even these promises seldom materialised because the clerks in the Finance Department assured the Finance Secretary that the condition of the provincial finances was so poor that such a heavy burden—Rs. 360 per annum for a number of years—would not be justified and public interest demanded that such precedent be not created and weakness not shown. The head of the Province had to announce this unpalatable decision in a friendly and sympathetic speech in answer to the most flattering and loyal address, and the chapter of that particular effort was closed. The result was inevitable. The rising generation of Punjab Muslims could not tolerate this treatment any longer and political feelings ran high and common interest of all communities brought about a union, defying all distinction of religion and race. The result was a common programme of reform in principle as well as in detail. The bureaucracy would not believe it. The Muslim aristocracy assured the bureaucracy that his was fiction, and 1919 followed.

This, however, does not mean that the position of Muslims in the Punjab in 1935 is no better than it was in 1920. There is a world of difference. It is true that in the services their representation has not appreciably improved. It is also true that their representation though slightly better in Local Self-Government than it was before the reforms, is not so much more than it was before as to make all the difference that there is between the Muslim position before the reforms and the Muslim position now. What then is the change, and what is it due to? There is a change. Before the reforms Muslim position was one of the servility all round. Servile to bureaucracy and servile to their neighbours, without hope, going about begging and being kicked all round. Whatever was given to them was believed to be by way of charity. The Montagu-Chelmsford reforms revolutionised the

position. The vote gave them an appreciation of their power, their strength. In fact it restored to them their self-respect. After the reforms what they wanted was, not charity, but their rights. What they wanted was not favour, but recognition, however tardy, of overdue claims. The legislature, and the good luck of acting together in the legislature, enabled them to see that all was not yet lost; that under certain circumstances it was possible to live respectably, claiming and obtaining respect from others whether bureaucracy or other communities and at the same time being ready to show respect to others. The creation of new Local Self-Government institutions promoted this feeling of self-respect, this feeling of existing in their own right and not being at the mercy of some-one else responsible for the development of an atmosphere wherein servility finds no place. The sister communities unfortunately took up the attitude "upstarts, servile creatures of yesterday posing as mighty people." The bureaucracy put up with this changed mentality and did not show resentment for obvious reasons. It was finding the sister communities quite a nuisance and the incidents of 1916 onwards were such as to make it welcome the Muslims. Thus the fiction grew of Government's favouritism of Muslims. For some time indications are not wanting that the whole position is being reviewed to see to what extent policies initiated in early twenties need revision.

This, however, is not the end of the story. Muslims and the rural Hindus of Ambala Division and Kangra district were starved under bureaucratic rule, like weak units all over the world. Under the reforms the policy of helping the backward people and the backward areas came as a God-send to them all. In matters of education, primary education was brought to the very doors of the rural people. Secondary education developed rapidly and rural Punjab had an educational awakening the like of which had not happened in the history of the Punjab before, and in no province had such far-reaching and rapid progress been witnessed even under the reforms. Primary education, secondary education, intermediate education, all developed to such an extent that the country yielded a big harvest of educated rural people. They found their way to various berths in the Government departments which used to be occupied by their friends of the urban areas who had command of better facilities and, therefore, naturally had better

prospects. Thus grew the fiction of Government favouritism of the rural areas in order to spite the urban people. This has no more foundation in fact than the allegation of Muslim favouritism.

Again, with local self-government becoming much more a reality than it used to be before the reforms, extension of medical

3. Uplift of rural relief in rural areas, expansion of veterinary relief throughout the country, development of agricultural facilities, development of co-operative enterprises, all these things breathed a new life into the rural Punjab wherein Muslims predominated. This gave them a position and status in the country which no agitation of the urbanites can take away. In fact that agitation can make the rural people hostile to the urban people and those who have the welfare of the province in mind, it is their business to compose matters and to make the urban classes realise that as long as their legitimate share in the administration is not threatened (meaning in proportion to their population in view of the general spread of education in rural areas), it is unwise to hope to cow down the rural classes by sheer press agitation. It should be remembered that press agitation is a game at which others can also play, and if the rural classes have recourse to press agitation and the feeling of hostility to the urbanites spreads in rural areas, the best interest of both will suffer.

Though the Muslims and the rural classes in general have started upon a new phase of life yet during the period of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms bureaucracy continued to rule, and the political position

has been such that the Ministry has been a ready scapegoat for all that happened. It was either the Muslim Minister or the Hindu Minister or the Sikh who did it, but as a matter of fact, no one could have done anything which was in any way unpalatable to the Governor. Thus a tension between the communi-

5. Hindu and Sikh press's share ties arose due to the hue and cry raised by individuals approaching the non-Muslim press and the latter took up the hue and cry with-

out sifting the matter or entering into friendly talk with the Muslims to understand the situation. Personal considerations predominated as in all countries. Political considerations in 1921 demanded that a

6. Personal element Hindu who had the confidence of the politically-minded Hindu Punjab should be the first Hindu Minister and other aspirants to

that office made a personal grievance of it, and pursued their personal grudge, to the prejudice of provincial interests. Such is the sad story of the genesis of ill-will between the communities in the Punjab.

B — COMMUNAL ASPIRATIONS AND THEIR NATIONAL ADJUSTMENT

10. What do the various communities declare their programmes to be and what, as a matter of fact, are their ambitions and aspirations? A clear and frank appreciation of this is essential so that an attempt may be made to suggest how the three communities can arrive at a common programme of action.

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|--|--|
|  | Muslims feel that they are 57 per cent.  |
| (a) Muslim position enun-<br>ciated :  | in the Punjab. Their voting strength under the reforms is likely to be not much below 50 per cent  |
| British rule inevitable  | They have brains, they have physique,  |
| (a) No desire to have<br>Muslim rule   | they are virile, they have faith in their future. There are not very many large landowners in the community and the moneyed people are few. Both these shortcomings are a blessing for the true progress and advance of the community. |
| (b) Prepared to accommo-<br>date minority communities<br>on partnership basis. |  |

They feel that they have been kept out of their dues too long. They are a majority only in name, not in voting strength, not in Local Self-Government, not in services. It is true that a civilized Government should not let a minority be depressed, but what about the Government which allows a majority to be depressed? And has not in the Punjab the Muslim majority been allowed to be depressed? And have not the bureaucratic efforts at helping the Muslims extending over a generation been a failure because the efforts were neither well conceived nor well made? The reforms have indicated line of advance and the Muslims feel that they should recover their legitimate position. What is their legitimate position, pray, is the question which the sister communities and the British Government well may ask. The Muslim community's reply is : a majority should not do anything to depress the minority, should not deny the minority a position to which their number entitled them simply because they are a minority and, therefore, not in power. But it does not mean that a minority should be placed in power and in authority over the majority and the positions reserved. The Muslims feel that they belong to the Punjab : they mean to stick to it, and they



do not mean to submit to being depressed any longer. There is a very large section of Muslims who do not like the idea of friction and trouble and would be willing to bring this horrible situation to an end, and by agreement settle, with non-Muslim communities on the basis of 51:49, thus forgoing for the time being 6 per cent. of their heritage. But remember, this is the view of the moderate Muslims—Muslims of yesterday or perhaps of to-day—but the far-seeing men are already apprehensive that the Muslim of tomorrow may be unwilling to concede the 6 per cent. They may well ask : Why ? and it will not be easy to give them a satisfactory reply. After all, the 25 per cent. rule made by the Government of India for Central subjects as approved by the Secretary of State, does not give the Muslim minority in India even a fraction of one per cent. in excess of their population basis. However, this is not the place for entering upon a controversy on this point. Punjab Muslims stand for the Punjab and they mean to discharge their duties and obligations towards the good of the province. They desire to be at peace with all fellow Punjabis. They have no desire to add to their numbers by pursuing a policy of either amalgamating the N. W. F. P. or even Sindh. They do not want to dominate the situation. They know perfectly well that as long as a single Britisher is in India, the idea of an Indian community dominating the situation in a province like the Punjab is moonshine and nonsense. They have no illusions on the subject. It is for the sister communities to decide whether they will let the Muslims have their legitimate share in the "shamilat" of the province or whether they will try to do them out of it and thus cause friction and trouble.

As to Hindus they see the situation right enough. They are less than 30 per cent. in the Punjab. They have hitherto dominated the position. Till recently the Sikhs did not exist. They had been absorbed by the Hindus. Hindu-position—Urbanite Hindus desire to return their existing control of the situation and stand for "let the week go to the wall." It is only since recently that the Sikh separatist movement started, and though religiously the Sikhs have proclaimed their independence, politically they are tied to the apron-strings of the Hindu politicians. The problem before them is, how to continue to dominate the situation, how to have the benefit of reforms for their Hindu brethren in other provinces and yet keep the Muslims in the Punjab out of the position which under the reforms is their due ? They know they have no case and, therefore, they intentionally confuse the issues and

create a good deal of noise and trouble, and instead of arguing, shout and shriek and do all sorts of things which are intended to conceal the real issues. So far as one can extricate an argument on their side, it is this : all offices in public service including clerkships and patwariships and constabulary should be recruited on the basis of a competitive examination irrespective of religion or backwardness. Similarly, for admission to educational institutions their contention seems to be that admissions should be by competitive examination. As to money-lending, etc., their position seems to be that there should be no restrictive legislation and that all should be left to free competition. They seem to hold that no protection should be given to anybody and that in the struggle for life the weak may be eliminated and the backward dropped off. It should be remembered that in the Punjab the Hindu solidarity is entirely due to their working up the Hindu feeling against the Muslim community. If they desisted from doing that, the Hindu society is bound to be split up in small factions. The Arya Samajists lead the reform movement and have made good progress in the province through their beneficent activities in particular in matters educational. Yet there is a fairly strong orthodox section which consider Arya Samajists no better than Muslims, in fact worse. Again the cleavage between the meat-eaters and vegetarians is by no means nominal. It is true that the number of the depressed is not very large in the Punjab, but still they are not non-existent. Again, the urban Hindu has dominated the situation till recently and the rural Hindu like the Muslim has only lately become conscious of his rights, and refuses to be ignored, or worse, bled any longer. The rural Hindu of the Ambala division is poor and miserable, like the Muslim of the "Pindi" division. For scarcity of water and unproductive land, the Hindu of Ambala and the Muslim of "Pindi" divisions have been compensated by robust physique, meant to extract a badly needed pittance from lands most unwilling to yield anything. Is it likely that these classes will allow the professional classes or the moneyed class to maintain their present exalted positions by inflaming religious passions of the masses and to continue to suck their blood? The poor of the Punjab have to be fed and the [well to do] classes better look out and be reasonable. Let bureaucracy also take note of the fact that conservative Government is not eternal and that their lord and master may, not in the very remote future, be a Labourite, perhaps a Socialist. Why worry about designations? Humanity's claim must be honoured and when that claim is seriously pressed by the masses, the petty

political and official intrigues are swept clean off their feet. So, in the case of the Hindus, the opposition comes from Urban Hindus of professional and moneyed classes, while the have-nots of the Hindu community whose number is very large in Ambala division and parts of Jullundur division are bound to make common cause with the have-nots of the Muslims, all being brethren in adversity.

The position of the Sikhs is most anomalous. These good people have no regard for anything except their own wish supported by their own will. Reason? Bah! What is in reason! Who cares for it? Law! We never made it? We are law unto ourselves. When you tell them, what nonsense, "you are only 12 to 13 per cent." they tell you, "we were not even 12 per cent. when we ruled over the Punjab."

What happened then, why can't it happen now? They conveniently forget that the emergence of John Bull sounded the death-knell of their sovereignty. They, however, feel satisfied that they know the trick of putting the fear of God into the mind of John Bull better than any other community. They may be very small in number, but they are the only community in India, who have won against the British Government and established the position of domination which commands the respect as well as fear of others and makes the Government give in. In case of conflict the Government give in and they are always careful indeed that there may be no conflict. This is very largely true. The Sikh started an anti-Government movement in the first decade of the century and brought the virus of sedition and terrorism from Canada and ever since, they claim to hold the

2. Canadian, Akali and Babar Akali elements, extremists, and even terrorists in Indian political life

foremost position in that phase of Indian activity. Their contributions to terrorism are claimed to be of the highest. Bhagat Singh's name is a household word all over India. Akalis, Babar Akalis have won regard in that line and if by any chance the terrorists secure success and establish a Government in India, that Government is bound to include a strong Sikhs element. Then in nationalist anti-British activities the contribution of Sikh has been very great. In all left-wing gatherings the Sikh have been proclaimed and recognised as the sword-arm of the Congress. They have claimed that they

brought about the downfall of Moghals, and India looks to them to bring about the downfall of the successors of Moghals. It is these sentiments which have permeated the Sikh mind with extremist politics and have rendered the position of the moderate-minded Sikhs entirely hopeless. The Punjab Government made a most useful contribution to the development of this mentality by helping the passing of the Sikh Gurudwara Act in 1925. The Sikhs enjoy adult suffrage. It has resulted in displacing all the Mahants, Sardars and Jagirdars and the proletariat of the Sikhs have come into their own. It may be that the Gurudwaras are not what they used to be; it may be that religiously and morally there is no improvement to be noticed but what is important is that the political centre of gravity has definitely shifted from the classes to the masses amongst the Sikhs. The Sikhs had a very clear and definite programme of political work. Firstly, down with the Mahants. They are outsiders, Hindus and non-Sikhs. They may have rights, but then the Sikhs invested them with those rights and it is up to the Sikhs to divest them of those rights. True the law supports them. Well then we must change the law. The law was changed; the Mahants were divested of their rights and the proletariat were invested with them. In the process as a second item of the programme the Sardars and Jagirdars realised that the Khalsa is out of hand, they had better keep away from it. Why, even the independent rulers of the Sikh States quaked in their shoes so far as the Akali Sikhs were concerned. What do they claim in the Punjab? Firstly, they are the predecessors-in-interest of the

British Government and thus entitled to  
Sikh claim—put in preferential position. Secondly, they ought to  
simple language have at least one third share in the adminis-  
tration of the Punjab and as friends and  
patrons of Hindus it is their business to see that another one-third is  
guaranteed to the Hindus: they will concede the remaining third to  
the Muslims provided that one-third is given to those Muslims who are  
selected by them. It is no use trying to argue with them. This is  
their position and to this position they tenaciously adhere. They feel  
that they have defeated the British Government and they have over-  
awed it. They further feel that in the case of Hindus they hadn't  
even to fight. In the case of Gurudwaras they mercilessly dealt with  
the Udasis and other Hindus who had anything to do with Guru-  
dwaras and Dharmshalas. They dug up the "marhies" (graves) of  
Mahants in the graveyards attached to Gurudwaras, they beat Mah-

mood Ghaznavi hollow in the matter of breaking idols which they said polluted their Gurudwaras, and the Hindus groaned, but dared not protest; and if they did protest, they were told to mind their own business, and they promptly submitted, and supported the Khalsa. What greater moral and political victory could have been achieved with so little bloodshed? Now having the support of the Hindus and having already impressed the British Government their prowess in all conflicts, they want to consolidate their position and proceed to prevent the Muslims from claiming their rights. This is the position of the leading men amongst the Sikhs,—men who are in touch with currents of political thoughts of all sorts in the country, men who want the position of prominence in all advanced political institutions. How long will they retain the implicit obedience of the masses? It is true that up till now they have been able to show to their followers that their turbulence, their unreasonableness, their defiance of law and Government have done the community no harm: on the other hand, they have secured advantages at the hands of Government which in all probability would not have been forthcoming but for this militant attitude. Yet the masses are now better educated than they were 15 years ago, and the masses are not the middle-classes. The Sikh masses want bread like the Hindu and Muslim rural masses. Glory is all very well, but without bread it cannot keep one going for any length of time. Therefore, it is not

But this will not satisfy the masses for long unreasonable to expect that the leadership will in course of time pass into the hands of those who care more for the welfare of the Sikh masses than for the vain-glorious drumbeating which distinguishes the militant Sikh leaders.

11. There are some very interesting features in the recent developments of various movements in the Punjab. Take the case of Arya Samaj. It started in the eighties with the object of reforming Hinduism, was definitely against idol worship, preached unitarianism and rationalism and thus was much closer to-Islam than orthodox Hinduism, and yet it is the Arya Samaj section of Punjab Hindus which has been waging communal war in the Punjab. Why? Because it is the section which is for aggressive sectarianism, revivalism and, therefore, anti-non-Hinduism, and within this anti-range come both the Muslim and the Britisher. The religious side is

in the back-ground. It is the political side which is dominating the movement and hence the conflict with the Muslim community. On the other hand, orthodox Hindus are religiously much farther from Islam than the Arya Samajists, but, up till now, they have not been aggressive in the domain of religion and, therefore, chronic conflict with the Muslims has not been their characteristic feature.

Again, take the Sikhs. Sikhism was a revolt against corrupt Hinduism of the 16th century. One has only to read the contributions of Guru Baba Nanak in the *Granth Sahib* to see how near his teachings were to Islam and yet Sikhism of to-day is anti-Muslim in the Punjab and friendly to Hinduism. Why? Because religion is used only as a cloak to conceal political struggle for communal aggrandizement. From the point of view of religion, Hinduism, in particular orthodox Hinduism, is anathema to Sikhism and the Sikh reform movement of the 20th century was a revolt against the absorption of Sikhism by Hinduism in the Punjab and resulted in sacrilege from the Hindu point of view to thousands of idols, and the movement culminated, during the first few years of the Montagu reforms, in sacrilege of a most objectionable kind, from the Hindu point of view, viz., the demolition of Hindu idols, demolition of Hindu 'mahals,' ejection of Hindu Mahants from Sikh Gurudwaras. Hindus were ready to sacrifice religious sentiments and Hindu interests for possible political alliance with the Sikhs against Muslims.

Again take the case of Muslims. In the last quarter of the 19th century Muslims used to have great religious controversies between the various sects Sunnis, Ahl-i-Hadis, Necharis, Mirzais and the orthodox and Deo Bandis, etc. The conflict of Islam with Arya Samaj and Christian Mission led to these sectarian controversies coming to an end; for quite a generation they died out. Mirzais appeared as the defenders of Islam and preachers of Islam. They were respected and supported by non-Mirzais. Other sectarian controversies ceased to exist. Why? Not because of religion, but because the political factor dominated and these things were left in the background. Recently there has been a revival of the controversies between the orthodox and the Mirzais. This again is in all probability due to political considerations dominating the situation. The extremists among Muslims felt that the Mirzais always siding with the Government weakened the Muslim position and, therefore, the forces of the Muslim community should be canvassed against them. Here again

an extremely interesting situation developed. The Government of the day used to favour Mirzais because they were always pro-Government and was opposed to the Khilafatists, Congress Muslims and the Ahrars because they were always against Government. The tables are a bit re-adjusted if not turned. It is believed that the Ahrars are the favourites of the Government and the first wife has gone out-of-favour. These, however, are very temporary incidents to which no great importance need be attached.

12. These interesting instances bring out certain points forcibly :—  
Deductions

- (1) The conflict is not religious but political.
- (2) The conflict is not with the object of ousting the British domination, but to secure a position of importance

Genesis of communal and influence under British domination, In troubles. the case of Muslims the desire is to obtain

their rights on population basis. In the case of Hindus it is to retain their present position of advantage against any encroachment on it and in the case of Sikhs it is for some loot or other in every affray that may be on. Each community wants to strengthen its position by accentuating the differences between itself and other communities, and the tendency is in every way to broaden the gulf between each community and discourage the bridging of such gulfs as already exist. The Sikhs want to solemnize the days of their martyrs in order to keep alive the animus against the Muslims. The Hindus draw upon history to discover Hindu leaders who suffered at the hands of Muslim rulers or successfully defied them. The Muslims, not to be left behind, want to celebrate the occasion of some conquest or other of theirs. Those leaders who talk of peace and concord between communities are the ones who encourage these movements whose only effect can be to widen the gulf between the communities. What is the object of Guru-Ka-Bagh Day. To promote and develop anti-British feeling. What is the object of observing Shaheedganj Day ? To develop and promote anti-Muslim feelings amongst the Sikhs. What is the object of observing Banda-Bahadur Day ? To emulate his great example in slaughtering Muslims. There is no nationalism in any one of these things. And to the same category belongs Abul Kasim Day—how Muslims conquered Sindh. Muslims could have established a Shaheedganj

And the inevitable result of the methods adopted by them at every great battle-field in India even the most sacred ones of the pre-historic period.

What is the object of it? Is this the way to build a united India? Is this the way to create a nation? Is it not more to purpose to definitely treat these historical events, in case they are historical and not mythical, as things of the past, minimise them and celebrate the occasions when the communities were at peace with each other instead of at war?

13. Again, let us for a moment examine what has been the fruitful cause of rioting between Hindus and Muslims during the past 15 or 20 years. Causes of rioting—not religious, but political, not *vis-a-vis*—the British but inter-communally Cow sacrifice. Is there any sense whatsoever in it? Every individual and every community can claim some sort of independence in going on with its own principles and observing its own ceremonies. But to say: “I will not let my neighbour observe his principles or his ceremonies” is ludicrous. A man can say: “I shall not eat meat; I am a vegetarian.” But one cannot understand how he can have the right to say, “my neighbour shall not eat meat because I am a vegetarian.” India is the last place where such mentalities should exist if India is to have any future whatsoever. If one can say anything in support of the movement against cow-sacrifice, why not against goat-sacrifice? Why not against killing any animal, and you may go a step further and raise an objection against eating anything. This is really reducing things to absurdity. Muslims, some time ago, used to give great trouble as to Jhutka meat-shops, but this again was very ridiculous. They do not like Jhutka. They need not have it. They cannot say Sikhs must not have it. Similarly pork shops. The Muslims hate pork. Well, let them not have it. But why not let the Christians have pork if they want it? Again the same about music before mosques. It is not a religious matter. No sane man ordinarily would disturb any community at prayers. Why do the Hindus do it? Not religiously, but politically. Why do Muslims create such a trouble about the ringing of Dharamshala bells? Not religiously but politically. The idea of each community is to assert the position of domination over the other. I am the master, therefore, my religion must have



precedence over yours. They are both very foolish because the domination is of the British and they have only the right to quarrel with each other. If the dispute were limited to religion there would be either no dispute or if it existed, it could be composed in no time. The Muslims could have their Azan and the Hindus their bell-ringing one after the other. Their prayers won't take such a long time. When the spirit of strife is up, they make it appear that their prayers take an unconscionably long time. This again is for political reasons and not for religious reasons. Therefore, it is obvious that all these matters fall into insignificance if the communities come to an absolutely honest understanding of their respective positions and realise that such struggling does not help them very much in achieving their communal object but renders their position as Indians weaker than ever before. Is it to the advantage of Hindus that this general position should continue to deteriorate? Do they consider that the Muslims are very anxious to become the rulers of some provinces in India with the domination of Hindus in other provinces? Here again it is necessary to make a cursory survey of likely political developments in various Indian provinces under the new Reform Scheme to see whether there is any reality in their fears and in their ambitions, or is it that this war is being waged unscrupulously to no purpose whatsoever?

In the following provinces, provincial autonomy has a better chance of success than in the others :—

Survey of the possibilities of the extent of provincial autonomy in different provinces.

Hindu domination practicable in Southern India and adjoining provinces

Central Provinces, Orissa, Madras, Bombay, and Bihar.

It will be noticed that in the C. P., the Muslim element is 4%, in Orissa perhaps 2%, in Madras 7%, in Bombay 8 or 9% and in Bihar perhaps 12%. Separate electorates

or no separate electorates, the Hindu majority is preponderating and it will be seen that in the reformed councils of these provinces provincial autonomy cannot come to grief on account of the communal troubles arising out of the existence of the Muslim element in the Legislatures, having been returned through separate electorates.

The Provinces where provincial autonomy has less chance than in those mentioned above are :—

The Punjab, Bengal, United Provinces, Assam, Sindh and Frontier Province.

In the Punjab, Muslims and Hindus—Sikhs—are more or less evenly balanced. Hence no communal majority can run the Government. In Assam, the Muslims with the representatives of miscellaneous groups, e.g., Europeans, Labour and backward races may challenge the formation of a preponderating Hindu Government. In the U.P., Muslims, large landowning interests and moneyed classes will not let the Hindu proletariat obtain the upper hand easily, and it is doubtful whether for a number of years to come the classes and the Muslims between them will not continue to retain the upper hand; but their position will not be strong enough to enable them to tyrannize over the Hindu proletariat. As regards Sindh, Muslims, though large in numbers, are entirely new to the political work on their own, and at present it is not known what sort of electorates the proposed franchise will give, and, in any case, the Sukkur Barrage is a heavy commitment which will keep the hands and feet of the provincial government tied for a large number of years to come. One might have thought that in the case of the N.W.F.P. with a clear Muslim majority, a Muslim Government would be an assured fact; but what a Muslim Government! one which is in the grip of the money-lender—the Government of India. The N.W.F.P. Government won't be able to call its soul its own, because of its impecunious condition. It will be autonomous Government only in name, and where there is no money the responsibility is theoretical and not practical. As regards Bengal the casting vote is in the hands of the British.

15. Besides these drawbacks there is the general handicap—the Governor's special powers. They may be due to the needs of the minorities, they may be due to the need of providing assurance to the people of that free exercise of their religion; they may be due to the most excellent reasons; but the fact remains that they result in placing the Governor above the Government as a court of appeal, as one who decides whether the Government is acting rightly or wrongly. In other words, the Government owes double responsibility, one to the Legislature and the other to the Governor, and in case of conflict the Governor's authority is such that it overrides the Legislature. Therefore, the autonomous provincial government is only autonomous under the superior autonomy or autocracy of H.E. the Governor. This however, is the theory of it. What may happen in practice no one can foretell. It depends upon

the ability of the Governor and the ability of the Indian Cabinet and the support it has in the Legislature and in the province. The dice are weighed very much against the Indian Cabinets, but it would be rash to forecast their failure.

16. In the Punjab appeals have been made to the Muslims to win the confidence of the minorities and to behave in such a manner as to make sure of the reforms. And it is suggested that if they did not do so, the failure of the reforms may deprive the Muslim community of the chances of running the Government as an autonomous power. These appeals have been made by the Hindu and Sikh press, and Hindu and Sikh leaders and by H.E. the Governor himself. In order to appreciate the value of these appeals it is necessary briefly to state what the atmosphere is like, to judge what the appeals amount to and to what extent the Muslim community can respond to them, and to what extent the responsibility in the matter lies with the Hindus and Sikhs and H. E. the Governor. Since August 1932, when the so-called Communal Award was announced by His Majesty's Government, the Hindus and Sikhs have more than once declared that the constitution of the Legislature is not acceptable to them inasmuch as firstly, the electorates are separate and not joint, and secondly, the number of seats given to Muslims is much more than they are prepared to agree to. In this respect they condemned the action of His Majesty's Government which in its turn is based on the recommendations of the Government of India and the Punjab Government. It is obvious that the mode of election already prevailing in the Punjab is being retained. Therefore, no reasonable objection could be taken to it. As regards the extent of representation it is being increased, but it is obvious that only 86 Muslims will be returned by separate electorates and, therefore, there is no Muslim majority through separate electorates. As regards the special seats, there are only 3 constituencies out of 10 in which Muslim voters preponderate, and there are 4 constituencies in which Muslim voters are and will be in minority. Thus in 3 out of 7, if elections proceed on communal lines, Muslims will be returned and in the remaining 4, Hindus and Sikhs. This will raise the number of Muslims to 89. As to the remaining three joint-electorate seats, they are all labour. Their constituencies have not yet been made and it is impossible to say

whether any of them will have preponderance of Muslim voters, and it is very, very doubtful that in more than one of these, Muslims voters will preponderate. Thus the maximum number of Muslims, in case elections are run on communal lines, would be 89—possibly 90. As soon as it is recognised that the President will be a Muslim, out of the remaining 174 members, 88 is bare majority, and, therefore, 89 is the lowest number which Muslims could have been given, consistently with their position as the majority community in the Punjab, and 89 is the number of which they can feel sure in case elections are run on communal lines. Therefore, it is altogether wrong to say that there is any force whatsoever in the agitation against the figures of Muslim representation in the local Legislature. Moreover, it is impossible for a communal Government to be established. Illness, unavoidable absence on business, accidents, all these can nullify the majority of one or two and render the communal Government a farce.

On the other hand, the formation of a non-communal party run on humanitarian lines, in the interests of the masses, with due regard to the rights of classes, is clearly indicated. That, however, is made difficult if various communities make a point of exciting religious feelings, religious animosities based on historical and even mythical events. It is not necessary to go into the responsibility of a particular community for the sad state of affairs. Let this however be remembered, that the Punjab Muslims may have something to lose in importance if provincial autonomy is put off and the present regime is continued, or even if there is set-back and the pre-Montagu system is restored. This will be the position not only in the Panjab, but in all other provinces as well. As it is, none of the provinces wherein the Muslims preponderate, has a chance of establishing a Muslim autonomous Government, and in the one place where it could be established, the position of the province is such that its revenues cannot suffice for its expenditure, and can have little scope for even beneficent work for the people. If the Punjab Hindus and Sikhs succeed in making provincial autonomy a failure in the Punjab they will have the credit of depriving the Hindus of C.P., Orissa, Madras, Bombay, Bihar and even U.P. of the blessings of provincial autonomy. It is for them to decide whether to serve their own pique and rancour, and do harm to their

What sort of Government can be established ?

An appeal to Hindus

co-religionists all over India or to behave reasonably and justly. The loss no doubt would be shared by the Muslims, but inasmuch as if the scheme succeeds the gain of the Hindus is much greater than that of the Muslims, in authority, in influence, in prestige and power; on its failure the loss of the Hindu community correspondingly must be much greater than that of the Muslims.

As explained in earlier parts of this discourse Muslims in the Punjab are majority only in name. They are not a majority in voting strength, nor in public services, nor in Local Self-Government, nor in the matter of grants and honours. Then what is it that they have to do to gain the confidence of the Hindus and Sikhs? On the other hand, the Hindus and Sikhs are in possessions of all things mentioned above far in excess of their population basis, and what matters are there in which they wish the Muslim community to adopt a course which will enable them to win the confidence of their Hindu and Sikh neighbours? If an appeal is to be made, it is to be made to the Hindu and Sikh communities to conduct themselves in a manner which would be reasonable, which would be just and fair. Again H.E. the Governor has made twofold appeals to the Muslim community. One is "stand united if you want to profit by the reforms." Excellent advice, but the Hindu press has criticised it violently as an encouragement to communalism. Secondly, the Governor has appealed to the Muslim community to be friendly to the Hindus and Sikhs so that the success of the provincial autonomy may be assured. He has not stated what he expects the Muslim community to do to achieve that object. Had he done so, the Muslim community would have had a chance of either acting on H.E.'s advice or expressing the reasons for their inability to act up to it. In the absence of that advice a general reminder can hardly be said to be very helpful. On the other hand one might have thought that in view of the situation as to services, etc., H. E. the Governor would have addressed his appeal to those who are in a position to obstruct. One might have thought that in view of the appeals of the Hindu and Sikh leaders to their respective communities to take up arms against the reforms and fight them tooth and nail and render their success impossible, he would have addressed himself to those communities and brought to their notice how they stood and what they should submit to, in order to prepare the ground for a reasonable agreement between all communities as to how the reforms should be worked.

17. It has often been said that the Punjab problem is the key to the solution of the Indian problem. Muslim leaders in Punjab, it has been said that the Punjab 1916 agreed to political is the Ulster of India. Once again, advance of India on certain undertakings being it is said that but for the Punjab the Indian problem would have been amicably settled given by Hindu leaders long ago. Once again, without solving the Punjab problem, the Indian problem cannot be solved. And again, ignore Punjab and proceed to solve the Indian problem. None of these is the whole truth. Nor can it be said that any of these is entirely untrue. These are what are called half-truths and, therefore, most dangerous. N. W. F. Province's geographical situation and the expensiveness of the administration, as compared with the revenues to be derived locally, renders autonomous Government there one only in name. Sindh is yet to be. There again, on account of the Sukkur Barrage its autonomy is more or less hypothecated to the Government of India for a long time to come. That leaves the Punjab with a possible Muslim majority in the Legislature, but a minority in all other respects. Under any form of representative responsible Government the Muslims were bound to find, ordinarily, that the authority would pass from the British to the Hindu hands, and for a very long time the Muslim policy was that this change shall not be agreed to, as it was definitely detrimental to Muslim interest. After prolonged discussions the Hindu leaders were able to persuade the Muslim leaders that they are prepared to assure them of their religious and cultural, social and educational individuality and integrity being honoured and maintained, that as they wanted separate electorates they were being conceded, and as they take to politics larger representation will be gladly provided. That was 20 years ago. The agreement had barely been working for two or three years when the Hindu leaders began to murmur dissatisfaction with the arrangements they themselves had arrived at and now most of them have completely gone against those assurances and decried the very arrangement of separate electorates which they had unanimously agreed upon without the slightest difficulty. In the change from the present constitution of Indian Legislature to the constitution proposed under the new reforms, the position of the Muslim community has not improved but has weakened inasmuch as with the official bloc, while they could have defeated a purely

Hindu majority in several legislatures, it will not be possible for them to do so after the new reforms. Still the Muslim leaders did not feel inclined to obstruct the change from diarchy to provincial autonomy, or from irresponsible Central Government to partially responsible Federal Government. The change for improved Muslim representation *qua* the Hindu representation is only in two provinces : the Punjab and Bengal. If India's Hindu leaders prefer diarchy to the proposed constitution, Muslim leaders are not prepared to force them to accept the new reforms and are prepared, with their Hindu brethren, to remain under the present diarchical Government and with the present constitution of Indian Legislatures. On the other hand, in spite of their objections to the amount of representation, provided for

Muslims in the Punjab and Bengal, if the  
Present position and Hindu leaders of India prefer the new consti-  
political programme tution to the present one, Muslims are pre-  
pared to agree with them and have the new  
constitution. Let it, however, be clearly understood that those who wish to work the new constitution should work it honestly, with the sole object of making the constitution yield the best possible results, i.e., the uplift of the Indian masses, pushing forward the cause of the backward people and the backward areas, provision of better facilities for the masses in all departments of Governmental activities. In other words, a definitely liberal and socialistic programme of work is indicated by the present-day needs of India. Irrespective of caste, class or creed those who subscribe to this programme should come together, hold together and constitute themselves into a party and do the best they can with the constitution, the British public, through the British Parliament, has been graciously pleased to give to India. Whether that constitution is good, or whether it could have been better or could have been worse are not questions with which we are here concerned. In other words, in the Punjab Hindus and Sikhs have every right to protest against what they called their under representation, but those who are coming forward to work under the new constitution should lay aside their dissatisfaction with it for the time being and be ready to work the new constitution for all it is worth. This means that they should be prepared for the time being to forgo under the new regime, those things which they claim for themselves in the next constitution, but at the same time claim and get every ounce of their rights under the new constitution. And the Muslims should be prepared to be satisfied with recovering their

rights in due course of time and not to be too impatient to hasten the pace of recovery; and thus a reasonable, honest, working compromise is not outside the pale of practical politics. It may not satisfy the extremists on either side but this is what practical men of business on both sides would recognise as the only way to serve the best interests of the province.

What does the Punjab want? First and foremost its self-respect.

The authorities had deprived the Punjab of it in 1919. Under the reformed administration Punjab recovered it. It has been felt for some time that the standard of self-respect to-day does not stand as high as it did some time ago. If this is so, it is much to be regretted and the recovery of that standard is essential in as much as no country can rise without self-respect.

Secondly, every effort should be made to assure equality of opportunity to all sections of the people. It is an extremely difficult duty for an administration to discharge but that is no reason for neglecting it. Every step advanced in that direction is a gain to the country. The favouritism of the pre-reform period had called for action, and under the reformed constitution the lift given to the lower-middle class, to the people without influence, on account of their personal fitness was such as to inspire confidence in the administration. The poor and the friendless felt that they had a chance, that the people of position and influence may have a better chance, but they too had a fair chance and the authorities were anxious to do them justice if possible. For some time now it has been felt that another class of the favoured has come into being and that they, in their turn, are more or less monopolising the opportunities and depriving the poor and the friendless of anything like the equality of opportunity. This must be remedied. Favouritism is an evil: every administration is liable to fall a prey to it but the integrity of an administration depends upon the extent to which it can conduct its affairs without being largely favouritism-ridden.

Thirdly, before the reforms the masses were neglected, the backward people were allowed to remain backward. After the reforms there was a great deal of work done to help the backward and the poor. The economic depression intervened and the programme of amelioration of the condition of the poor and the backward was dropped. Under the reforms it is the clear duty of the new Government to overhaul its



finances, and its administration to make sure that under the altered financial and economic conditions it is not the development of the beneficent activities which has to be sacrificed but that the cost of administration should be brought down.

Fourthly, there is, on account of changed financial and economic conditions in the Punjab, and for the matter of that in India and the world, a need for re-adjustment of economic fabric (of the province). It is a work of the most gigantic nature needing the best brains of the province. So far as the Punjab is concerned bankruptcy stares it in the face. Its wealth lay in its agricultural produce of which the price has gone down tremendously. What is needed is a determined effort to evolve a scheme to meet the present-day requirements in the best interests of the province, crop planning, reforming the methods of marketing, developing cottage industries and encouraging suitable industries in the rural areas to utilise the raw material produced in the tract. There are many other pressing needs. These call for whole-hearted and united efforts by those who are prepared to undertake the work of reconstruction and uplift; and work of this gigantic nature cannot be undertaken unless useless and meaningless bickerings between communities and classes are put away, at all events for the time being, and the work staring the province in the face taken up in all earnestness.

## Serving the Weak and Raising the Fallen\*

CHOWDHRI SIR CHHOTU RAM

Brethren and Friends,

Many of you have paid me a number of highly gratifying compliments with reference to the part which, you believe, I have played in the achievements of the Unionist Party. While I am sincerely grateful to you for these flattering references, you will, I am sure, readily understand my reluctance to launch on a discussion of party politics in their concrete form. The present occasion is not one which I can appropriately seize for defending or applauding the specific legislative or administrative measures put through by the Unionist Party during the last few years which, in your view, have brought about the economic salvation of the exploited masses, but round which so much bitter controversy has raged and still continues to rage. However, it will not be without interest to you, and may be of some help to the general public in understanding me, if I give, in brief outline, the natural evolution of my politics.

I was born and brought up in rural surroundings which gave me a close and deep insight into the handicaps, difficulties, trials and tribulations of the rural population. This insight could not have failed to influence the whole course of my psychological and moral growth. Side by side with the imperceptible and constant working of this factor, a deep and passionate love for the Jat tribe in which I was born warmed my heart from early life. A Sanskrit couplet which I read in one of my text books, the *Hitopdesha*, for the first time in 1897 sowed in my young breast the seed of that inchoate desire which, in later years, grew into powerful passion for uplifting my tribe educationally, socially, economically and politically. The simple rendering of this couplet into English is — “In the ordinary course of nature thousands are born every day, but he alone is truly born whose birth leads to the elevation of his race.”

My seven years of student life at Delhi brought me into close

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Speech delivered by Chowdhri Sir Chhotu Ram on the occasion of his 61st birthday celebrated at Rohtak on March 1, 1942.—G.S.

contact with students drawn from the highly cultured sections of Delhi society. My relations with them were always entirely cordial. But in friendly banter these urban comrades always styled their school and college fellows from the countryside as rustics, clowns and bumpkins. Jats came in for a particularly heavy share of these epithets. The epithets were used in perfect good humour with no desire to hurt and no conscious sting behind them. But it will be idle to pretend that they did not proceed from an undercurrent of a feeling which, though innocent in appearance, had a vein of disrespect and disdain for my class. Unpleasant heart-searching followed and furnished nurture to the sapling which had been firmly planted in my heart by the couplet in the *Hitopdesha*.

A little more than four years (June 1908 to September 1912) I spent at Agra where I took my law degree and started legal practice. During these four years I made a close study of local conditions in the Agra and Meerut Divisions. The knowledge gained there further strengthened my desire to respond to the inner call for action in the direction of improving the lot of Jats. In fact, with the help and co-operation of some local friends I succeeded in initiating some useful work of minor importance. But, to my utter surprise, the U.P. Arya Pratinidhi Sabha sought to impose a ban on the tribal activities of some of my co-workers in the cause. This attempt of the Pratinidhi Sabha only served to redouble my zeal.

In the autumn of 1912 I shifted to Rohtak. Progressive forces, stimulated by the advent of the Arya Samaj and some ill-conceived repression on the part of Government which commenced in 1908 and had not entirely disappeared when I arrived, were already in existence waiting for guidance and direction. A band of ardent workers, consisting mostly of Arya Samajists, with the notable exception of Rao Bahadur Chaudhri Lal Chand and a couple of retired military Indian Officers, was ready at hand. A vigorous campaign was started, in mutual consultation, to awaken the Jats from their lethargy. The response was splendid. An uneasy flutter became visible among vested interests. Vehement opposition from both expected and unexpected quarters was offered to our innocent efforts for awakening a class whose ignorance and placid pathetic contentment had afforded rich opportunities for exploitation and victimization.

Our initial efforts were directed mostly towards the social, economical and educational amelioration of our class. But we did not

conceal our desire to awaken it to a sense of its political rights and duly emphasized its local political importance. The attempts which were made to thwart our efforts and to prevent a class which constituted the real backbone of the whole Haryana tract from rising to its legitimate position of importance and influence whipped up into full life and vigour the powerful urge which owed its origin to the Sanskrit couplet already referred to.

But, while I was primarily concerned, at this stage of my life, with the advancement of Jats alone, I had perceived almost intuitively that to rescue the Punjab as a whole from the domination of vested interests, the net would have to be cast sufficiently wide to embrace all agricultural tribes, irrespective of religion. A few attempts were made to secure the co-operation of all agricultural tribes, Hindu and Muslim. Unfortunately, these attempts proved ineffective while successful counter-attempts were made to isolate Jats with the result that Jats found everybody's hand turned against themselves. But, in spite of bitter disappointments and powerful provocation, we resisted the temptation of turning the hand of Jats against everybody else.

The outbreak of the last Great War and the magnificent response which Jats of Haryana made while it lasted helped to establish their position on a firm footing throughout the Ambala Division.

Here I may be allowed to make a reference to another feature of my disposition. Political subjection and foreign domination were as irksome to me as they were to any patriotic Indian as they should be to any normal human being. So I associated myself actively with the Congress, became the President of the first District Congress Committee and preached the Congress cult for nearly four years both from the limited platform which we had in the district and in the *Jat Gazette* which I had started here as a weekly Urdu Paper.

I must also allude here to an inner struggle which worried and puzzled me. In the beginning I was a fairly bigoted Arya Samajist and, as a natural corollary, a communalist. This conflicted with my aspiration for a united front among zamindars (in the Punjab sense of the word), regardless of caste and creed. I was definitely a bigoted Jat and a bigoted zamindar, and, thus a sectarian. This conflicted with the orthodox requirements of nationalism. I was a Congressman, both inwardly and outwardly, and thus anti-government. This conflicted with my conviction that a backward class—and the class to which I belonged was admittedly a backward class—cannot afford to

fight against Government.

This inner conflict set me a difficult problem to solve. After prolonged and careful consideration, I discovered a solution which, to my mind, was perfectly satisfactory. The solution was as follows :-

- (a) Religion must be divorced from politics, and political organization must proceed on the basis of economic interests. So I decided to relegate religion to its proper place in private life.
- (b) To serve the weak and to raise the fallen is, in my view, the essence of human duty. Agricultural classes are the most numerous and yet most ruthlessly exploited section of the Indian community. They provide, at least in the Punjab, ready elements for bringing into existence a powerful well-knit unit of political organisation. If organised on the basis of community of economic interests, they will bring about harmony first in the Punjab and later, by the contagion of example, in the whole of India and thus lay the foundation of the country's political salvation. Their organisation on these lines will secure the common benefit of the largest section of the poor and the down-trodden including Jats. Thus organised, they will also serve as the vanguard, as the champions, of all exploited classes. The organisation of agricultural classes, though sectarian logically, will serve the interests of nationalism no less than those of my pet sectionalism.
- (c) Jats should be warned against associating themselves as a class with the Congress, but educated individuals of the class who can understand the implications and consequences of their political activities should be encouraged to join the Congress.

This process of argument, though it may not appeal to others, served to silence the conflict which had been raging within me. I worked along these lines for several years. My views were both resented and misunderstood by many Arya Samajists who interpreted them as an attempt on my part to detach Jats from the fold of the Hindu community. My association with the Congress was deeply resented in official circles while my advocacy of the organisation of zamindars as such was viewed with distrust by those orthodox Congressmen who did not know me well enough.

I worked with the Congress up to 1920 when non-co-operation received the official sanction of the Congress in its special session at Calcutta. Mahatma Gandhi insisted that in order to be successful in

its purpose, non-co-operation was to be on a mass scale and was to remain, from beginning to end, non-violent not only in action but also in word and thought. Defiance of law and non-payment of taxes were to be among the main planks of the movement. I never believed and never can believe, that any campaign of non-co-operation on a really wide scale would remain peaceful or non-violent ever in action. Non-violence in word or thought is possible only among angels, and we all know that the general body of men are anything but angels. Defiance of law and non-payment of taxes are, to my mind, on a par with armed revolt, and lay the axe at the root of those fundamental principles on which the structure of human society rests. They must inevitably result in violence, bloodshed, chaos and confusion. The whole fundamental basis of the movement on which hopes of success depended being thus, in my humble opinion, essentially unsound and opposed to all human experience, I came to the conclusion that non-co-operation was a futile creed, and resigned from the Congress.

Thus terminated my connection with the Congress.

The attitude adopted by our non-agriculturist Hindu brethren first towards the appointment of Rao Bahadur Chaudhri Lal Chand as a Minister and later on towards my own appointment in succession to him coupled with their subsequent behaviour in all succeeding elections confirmed me still further in my belief that religion is a spurious tie in politics. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru declared in his presidential address or some subsequent speech at Lahore in 1929 that economics exhausted nine-tenths of politics. That is also the sheet-anchor of my politics. In fact, I have an unshakable faith in the proposition that the coercive force of common economic interests will ultimately prove an effective cure for the malady of communalism. The debates in the Punjab Assembly on agrarian laws which were strenuously opposed by all capitalists, irrespective of their race or religion, and the present *hartal* of *Beoparis*, in which all *Beoparis*, without distinction of religious faith, have readily joined under the natural driving force of common secular interests, furnish a conclusive proof, if any proof was needed, of the truth of my assertion.

I made a confession a few moments ago that I started my public life as a communalist. But my class instincts proved so strong and overpowering that they completely submerged my communalism. The last lingering traces of communalism had been completely washed away by 1930 as a result of the unmitigated campaign of calumny, vilification and misrepresentation carried on by a certain section of

the Hindu community and its press against Hindu zamindars in general and against Hindu Jats and myself in particular. That campaign still persists and I stand foursquare, as a pure Unionist, to all the winds that blow or may start from any of the points of the compass.

Allow me to disclose another secret of my life. In my dogged persistence on the path of what I consider to be my duty I have been chiefly sustained by the divine philosophy which was unfolded not far from here on the famous battle-field of Kurukshetra more than five thousand years ago. Lord Krishna says :-

“Thou shalt not depart from the path of duty by any hope of reward or fear of penalty; thy concern is only with action, not with the fruit thereof. . .”

“In the performance of thy duty thou shalt be indifferent to comfort and discomfort, to gain and loss, to victory and defeat.”

Next to the *Gita*, the dynamic philosophy preached by the late Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal, the poet-philosopher of the East, has deeply tinged my mentality. Addressing humanity in general Iqbal says :

“Firm faith, incessant action and all-conquering love are the true weapons of warriors in the battle of life.”

Emphasizing the importance of self-confidence and self-improvement, Dr. Iqbal says to individuals :-

“Raise thy Self to such a mighty height that God Himself will be forced to ask thee: ‘What destiny will thou have’ ?”

Addressing the peasant the ‘Poet of the East’ says :-

“Why art thou the victim of faint-heartedness ? Look inwards; thou hast the might of a storm hidden in thee.”

I have deep conviction in these teachings of Lord Krishna and Dr. Iqbal. This conviction reflects the inner soul of my politics and constitutes the real philosophy of my life. I have chosen the path of serving the weak and raising the fallen according to my own lights and have selected the agricultural classes as the symbol of weakness and as the standard-bearers of the army of rescue and relief against the forces of social tyranny and economic exploitation. Let nobody misconstrue my love and sympathy for the poor and the down-trodden as hatred for any class. I bear no ill-will towards any individual or any class, and am always ready to forgive those who, through ignorance or misinformation, come to bear ill-will towards me. Of course, this does not mean that I forgo the right to hit back if and when those in full knowledge of facts choose to hit me wantonly.

Before I conclude, let me address a few brief words of advice to the friends assembled here, particularly to the members of the younger generation upon whom the future of our country depends.

- (a) Think deeply, carefully, calmly and dispassionately until you form a clear conception of your goal. When the goal has once been clearly formed, follow it with your gaze steadily fixed on it, undeterred by difficulties, undaunted by setbacks, undismayed by defeats, unperturbed by the jeers of adversaries.
- (b) Banish religion from politics. Religion is a mere dope, an opiate, administered to you by interested and designing people to prevent clear and independent thinking.
- (c) Practise subordination of the interest of individual to the interest of the community systematically until it becomes a fixed habit.
- (d) Bow before the decision of the majority as if it were a decision made by you in the exercise of your own free volition.
- (e) Render unquestioning obedience to the command of the leader after it has once issued.
- (f) If you belong to any of the backward classes, resolutely refuse to hand over the reins of leadership to outsiders. People led by outsiders can never develop those qualities of independence, dignity, self-respect, self-help and self-reliance which alone hold the key to success and progress.



## Prayer to the Governor-General of India

To Declare the Muslim League an Unlawful Association, May 1947

NAROTAM SINGH

To

The Governor-General in Council,  
Simla.

Humble petition of Narotam Singh, Advocate, High Court, Lahore, under Section 16(2) of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1903, for declaring the All-India Muslim League an 'unlawful association' under the said Act.

May it please Your Excellency,

I have appended herewith extracts from newspapers, reports, etc., which conclusively go to show that the above mentioned organisation is an unlawful association under Section 15 of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1908. No doubt it is very powerful organisation but, if it is denied the Muslim Police assistance and Muslim officers' protection, and the British patronage, its criminal activities, which are a menace to the public peace, can be effectively checked. The Muslim League has virtually declared a war on the non-Muslims on the passing of the Resolution on "Direct Action."

All the Muslim members of the various provincial and the Central Legislatures signed the following pledge at the convention of League Legislators, held at Delhi on Tuesday, the 9th of April, 1946:

"I, a member of the Muslim League Party of the Legislative Assembly/Council do hereby solemnly declare my firm conviction that the safety and security and the salvation and destiny of the Muslim Nation inhabiting the continent of India lie only in the achievement of Pakistan which is the one equitable, honourable and just solution of the constitutional problem and which will bring peace, freedom and prosperity to the various nationalities and communities of this great sub-continent.

"I most solemnly affirm that I shall willingly and unflinchingly carry out all the directions and instructions which may be issued by the All-India Muslim League in pursuance of any movement launched by it for the attainment of the cherished national goal of Pakistan, and

believing as I do in the rightness and justice of my cause, I pledge myself to undergo any danger, trial or sacrifice which may be demanded of me.

“Our Lord bestow on us endurance and keep our steps firm and help us against the disbelieving peoples. Amin. *Signature . . .*

*[Dawn, 11.4.46.]*

Sir Feroz Khan Noon, formerly a member of Viceroy's Executive Council, made an impassioned plea for Pakistan while addressing the Muslim Legislators' Convention, in the course of which he said :

“I tell you this much, if we find that we have to fight Great Britain for placing us under one Central Government or Hindu Raj then the havoc which the Muslims will play will put to shame what Khan Halaku did.” *[Tribune, April 11, 1946.]*

Sir Feroz further said that the only course left open to Muslims was to look to Russia. There was already a great movement in the Punjab, including landlords, in favour of communism.

On 29-7-1946, the All India Muslim League Council passed the following Resolution :-

“Whereas the All-India Muslim League has today resolved to reject the proposals embodied in the statement of the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy dated May 16, 1946, due to the intransigence of the Congress on the one hand and the breach of faith with the Muslims by the British Government on the other :

“And whereas Muslim India has exhausted, without success, all efforts to find a peaceful solution of the Indian problem by compromise and constitutional means;

“And whereas the Congress is bent upon setting up a caste Hindu Raj in India with the connivance of the British;

“And whereas recent events have shown that power politics and not justice and fairplay are deciding factors in Indian Affairs;

“And whereas it has become abundantly clear that the Muslims of India would not rest content with anything less than the immediate establishment of an independent and full sovereign State of Pakistan and would resist any attempt to impose any constitution, long term or short-term, or setting up of any interim government at the centre without the approval and consent of the Muslim League, the council of the All India Muslim League is convinced that now the time has come for the Muslim Nation to resort to Direct Action to achieve Pakistan and to get rid of the present slavery under the British and

contemplated future caste Hindu Domination.

"This Council calls upon the Muslim Nation to stand to a man behind their sole representative organisation. The All-India Muslim League and be ready for every sacrifice.

"This Council directs the working committee to prepare forthwith a programme of Direct Action to carry out the policy initiated above and to organise the Muslims for the coming struggle to be launched as and when necessary." [*Dawn*, 3-7-46]

On 4th of August, 1946, Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, General Secretary of the Muslim League, declared at Delhi to the Associated Press of America that if the Congress should form a Government at the Centre :

"We will resist it by all means and will make the functioning of such a Government impossible.

The possibility of formation of a Government by Congress, which has been discussed widely since the Muslim League withdrew its acceptance of the British Cabinet Mission Proposals, would be a signal for the Muslim League to start its programme of Direct Action, the League secretary said. "Direct Action means resorting to non-constitutional methods", he explained, "and that can take any form and whatever form may suit the conditions under which we live."

Asked what specific action might be taken, Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan replied :

"We cannot eliminate any method. Direct Action means any action against the law." [*Dawn*, 5.8.46.]

Mr. Altaf Hussain, editor of the *Dawn* Newspaper founded by Mr. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, published on the eve of the "Direct Action Day" in its issue dated the 17th of August, 1946, in bold headlines the announcement of the Direct Action Day and declared at the end of page five thereof :

**"Now Might Alone Can Secure Their Right."**

In Delhi itself "hundreds of Muslim employees of the Government of India observed "Direct Action Day" by not attending their offices. [*Dawn*, 18.8.46.]

Serious disturbances broke out in Calcutta on the occasion of the celebration of the "Direct Action Day" by the Muslim League. Massacre of men, women and children, arson, loot, criminal assault on women went on for three or four days till the Military took over from the civil authority after thousands of human souls had been killed or perished and innumerable number of them had been injured, looted

and assaulted. The Government in Bengal was being run by Muslim League, under the premiership of Mr. H.S. Suhrawardy, Pakistan flag was hoisted by Muslim students on Government Secretariat and Chief court buildings at Karachi on "Direct Action Day". Pir Jlahi Baksh, Sind Minister, addressing the Muslim students, on the "Direct Action Day" said :

"The League flag hoisted by the students over the Secretariat Building should remain there hereafter. The Bengal Premier had declared that on the day the Congress formed an Interim Government at the centre, he would raise the flag of independent Bengal. Sind would be following Bengal's example". [Tribune, 18.8.46.]

In Peshawar, Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar in a meeting presided over by Pir Sahib of Manki-Sharif declared, "Pakistan can only be achieved through shedding of blood by ourselves and if need be and opportunity arose by shedding of blood of others. Mussalmans are no believers in the creed of *Ahimsa*. We will adjust as the situation demanded. Whether by violence or non-violence, we have got to break the unholy alliance of British Imperialists with Hindu capitalists. There are only two alternatives before you now.

"Either be prepared to shed every ounce of blood and stake every penny for achievement of Pakistan or live a life of serfdom."

[Tribune, 18.8.46.]

In Allahabad a communal riot broke out on the next Friday, the 23rd August, 1946, at the conclusion of prayers at Jumma Masjid (Mosque).

[Tribune, 24.8.46.]

On 25th of August 1946, the names of the members of the Interim Government at the Centre were announced in the newspapers, including that of Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan, who had very recently resigned from the Muslim League. Sir Shafaat Ahmed was stabbed in Simla on 25th August, 1946. At Delhi the office of Jamait-ul-Ulema-i-Hind (an association of Muslim scholars not following Muslim League programme) was raided and its watchman was assaulted and all papers and files were burnt. A week previous to the incident an anonymous letter was received by Mualana Ahmed Sayeed, Vice-President of All India Jamait-ul-Ulema-i-Hind giving him and other Jamiat leaders the warning that if they did not come into the fold of the Muslim League, their life would be in danger and their office would be set fire to. The letter was forwarded to the Deputy Commissioner. [Tribune, 27.8.46.]

On 31st August, 1946, Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan, the Punjab Muslim League's chief spokesman in the Legislative Assembly indicated before a mammoth gathering at Lahore, the following five points about the shape of Direct Action to come, which, he said, "Friends have suggested".

- (i) Total economic, social and political boycott of the British and the Congress.
- (ii) Non-payment of taxes by Muslims.
- (iii) Scotchd earth policy on the Russian pattern, refuse to grow more food and decline to give grain to enemies.
- (iv) Government service by Muslims to be declared illegal.
- (v) Defiance of S. 144 ban, wherever it be on the carrying of arms.

Asking Muslims to keep themselves in readiness for the struggle ahead, Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan said, "Do nothing untill the fire order oomes from Qaed-e-Azam Jinnah."

[C. & M. G., 31.8.1946.]

About the inauguration of the Interim Government (in which the Muslim League refused to participate), he said :

"On September 2, the foundation of a civil war will have been laid, Pandit Jawahar Lal's Government was bound to meet the fate of Bacha Saqqa's short lived Government in Afghanistan without the co-operation of 100,000,000 Muslims".

At ths same meeting Mian Mumtaz Daultana, a member of the Direct Action Committee of Muslim League, declared:-

"The satanic moves of Lord Wavell and the British Government, in which the Congress has willingly and foolishly let itself be trapped, will make Hindus and Muslims fight among themselves eternally. Our fight will be directed against the British but if thorns come in our way from any quarter they will have to be removed. If Hindu leaders have still any wisdom left in them they should seek the co-operation of the Muslim League for the freedom of both Pakistan and Hindustan and to avoid all bloodshed".

On 2nd September, 1946, the Interim Government was installed at Delhi. Communal riots broke out at Bombay and some other towns. 2nd September 46, was observed as a "Black Day" by the Muslim League.

The working committee of the Punjab Muslim League after a two day meeting adopted the following resolution :

"This meeting of the Working Committee of the Punjab Provincial

Muslim League places on record its contempt for the unholy compact between British Imperialism and Congress Hindu Capitalism which has resulted in the so-called Interim Government and voices the emphatic determination of the Muslim people of the Punjab not to recognise this Government in any way or to consider its decisions and mandates as having any validity or sanction whatsoever for them.

"The Working Committee of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League conveys to the Qaed-e-Azam and the All India Muslim League Committee of Action the complete readiness and eagerness of the Muslims of the Punjab to bear all the consequences of the repudiation of the civil authority of this contemptible Government and requests them to form a programme of Direct Action as is based on a full acceptance of the implications of such a repudiation".  
[Dawn, 8-9-46.]

On the 3rd September, 1946, the Working Committee of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League called upon every able bodied Muslim in the Province to enlist immediately in the Muslim National Volunteers Corps. The Committee urged :

"The Muslims of the Punjab have to prepare themselves for the coming struggle on which their life as an independent and honourable nation depends. In this struggle we stand in need of devoted men who have consecrated their life to serve and sacrifice everything for Islam and Pakistan, and, who have trained themselves for the strictest discipline and unquestioned obedience to the word of command",

Sating that the Muslim nation must have as its 'vanguard' a whole army of trained and devoted volunteers, the Committee said :

"To achieve this object rapidly and Without delay the Working Committee of the Punjab Muslim League appeals to every able bodied Muslim in the Punjab immediately to enlist in the Muslim National Volunteers corps, the Muslim National Guards." [Dawn, 4-9-46.]

On 4th September, 1946, Khan Iftikhar Hussain Khan of Mamdot, President of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League, appealed to the Muslim students to stand resolute and prepared to participate in the proposed grim struggle at the signal to be given by Mr. Jinnah. He appealed to the members of the legal profession to rise to the occasion and devote their entire energy to carry the message of the Muslim League to the people of the Punjab. He said :

"For another month most of the Muslim Lawyers will have

considerable time to spare because of the vacation. Therefore, in the name of Islam and Pakistan, I appeal to every one of them to cast aside all thought of personal occupation, business and profit, and as shock troops of the Muslim League to spread out all over the Province in every village, qasba, town and city and do preliminary spade work of propaganda without which no revolutionary upsurge and determined struggle is possible." [C. & M. G., *Dawn*, 5.9.46.]

He called upon Muslim women to learn first aid and said

"It is not for you to go into the battle but you must prepare yourself now to protect and heal the war-scarred." [Tribune, 5.9.46.]

In Peshawar, Khan Abdul Qaiyum Khan, Leader of the Muslim League Parliamentary Party N.W.F.P., said :

"We can never accept caste Hindu Government at the Centre. We are determined to smash it. We will see that it is not allowed to function." [Dawn, 5.9.46.]

On 6th September, 1946, the North West Frontier Province Muslim League Council of Action, after a two day meeting at Cherat under the presidentship of Pir Sahib of Manki-Sharif passed three Resolutions regarding the Muslim League's Direct Action Programme in the Frontier Province :

The Council called upon Frontier Muslims to make all their purchases of necessities of life from Muslim shopkeepers.

Council urged upon Muslim lawyers to devote all their spare time to propagating the correct Muslim League point of view among the Frontier masses.

Council deputed Khan Bakht Jamal Khan, former President, Frontier Provincial Muslim League, to prepare a list of all Frontier Muslim preachers and orators in order to send them forth in various groups to undertake Muslim League propaganda throughout the Frontier Province. [C. & M. G., 7-9-46.]

On 16th September, 1946, about 10,000 people (of whom about 6,000 carried rifles) assembled at the first joint meeting of Muslims in the settled districts of Peshawar and Mardan and of Afridi tribesmen, under the auspices of Muslim League at Kanddao, wherein, under the chairmanship of Pir of Manki-Sharif, resolution for the achievement of Pakistan through Direct Action, if necessary, was passed. [C. & M. G., 17-9-46.]

Pir of Manki-Sharif presided at mammoth meetings held at various places in the Frontier Province wherein he continued to exhort the Muslims to come out for *Jihad* at the cost of life and property and

achieve Pakistan. [*Eastern Times*, 10-10-46.]

On 30th September, 1946, Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy, leader of the Opposition in the Bengal Legislative Assembly, gave a warning at the floor of the house that "bustees were full of new faces and suspicious looking people were moving from bustee to bustee; various pamphlets, printed and typed were being distributed and one felt that there was some organisation going on underground for concerted hooliganism." [*C. & M.G.*, 1-10-46.]

In Delhi, Nawab of Bhopal was making frantic efforts to bring about the entry of Muslim League in the Interim Government.

The news about the League joining the Interim Government reached the public on the same day on which the news about the reign of terror in East Bengal filtered out in press. [*Tribune*, 19-10-46.]

Mr. Ghazanfar Ali Khan, Member-designate of the Interim Government on behalf of the Muslim League, addressing the Islamia College students at Lahore on Saturday, the 19th October, 1946, declared :

"We are going into the Interim Government to get a foothold to fight for our cherished goal of Pakistan, and I assure you that we shall achieve Pakistan. ... The disturbances which have occurred in many parts of the country after the installation of the purely Congress Government at the Centre have established the fact beyond any shadow of doubt that the ten crores of Indian Muslims will not submit to any Government which does not include their true representatives. The Congress should realise, and the earlier the better, that no power can suppress the freedom upsurge among the Muslim nation. We irrevocably stand for Pakistan as our ultimate goal and I assure you that under the leadership of Qaed-e-Azam Jinnah we shall achieve our goal." [*Dawn*, 2-10-46.]

Acharya Kriplani, the newly elected Congress President, from his visits in the interior of Chandpur and Noakhali (East Bengal) came to the following conclusions :

1. The attack on the Hindu population in the districts of Noakhali and Tipperah was previously arranged and prepared for. It was deliberate, if not directly engineered by the Muslim League. It was the result of Muslim League propaganda. The local evidence all went to prove that prominent League leaders in the villages had a large hand in it.

2. The authorities had warnings about what was coming. The



warnings were conveyed to them orally and then in writings by prominent Hindus in the areas concerned.

3. Some of the Muslim officials connived at the preparations going on, while a few encouraged them. There was a general belief among the Muslims that the Government would take no action if any thing was done against the Hindus.

4. The *modus operandi* was for the Muslims to collect in batches of hundreds and in some places thousands and to march to Hindu villages or Hindu houses in villages of mixed population. The crowds had their leaders and spokesmen. These first demanded subscriptions for the Muslim League and some times for Muslim victims of Calcutta riots. These enforced subscriptions were heavy, sometimes amounting to Rs. 10,000/- and more. Even after the subscriptions were realised, Hindu population was not safe.

The same or successive crowds appeared on the scene later and looted the Hindu houses. The looted houses in most cases were burnt. The looting was not merely confined to cash, ornaments and other valuables. Everything that could be utilised by the householders, such as foodgrains, utensils, clothes, etc., were also looted. In many places the looters also drove away cattle themselves. Some times before a house was looted, the inmates were asked to embrace Islam. However, even conversions did not give them immunity against loot and arson.

The slogans raised by the attacking Muslim crowds were those of the Muslim League, as "*League Zindabad*" (Long Live League), "*Pakistan Zindabad*", "*Lar-ke Lenge Pakistan*" (after fighting will get Pakistan), "*Maar-ke Lenge Pakistan*" (after killing we will take Pakistan).

The Hindu population was also told that the murder, loot and arson that went on was in revenge for the Muslims lives lost in the Calcutta rioting. All those who resisted were butchered. Some times they were shot, for the rioters used guns. These guns either belonged to the Muslim Zamindars or were stolen or snatched away from the Hindus. Some times people were killed even when there was no resistance offered. [C.M.G., 27-10-46.]

The total number of persons killed and injured in communal riots between July 1st and October 10, 1946 was estimated by the Government of India at 5018 and 13320 respectively, exclusive of casualties in October disturbances in Eastern Bengal. [C.M.G., 5-11-46]

According to (Muslim League's) Home Minister's Parliamentary Secretary of the Bengal Government about 10,000 persons were forcibly converted and about 11,000 houses were looted, majority of them having

been burnt also. The number of deaths was given as only about 300 in the Noakhali and Tipperah districts of Eastern Bengal in October, 1946. [*Tribune*, 2-5-47.]

In the United States of America, the Official representative of Mr Jinnah declared :

"India is heading for a great civil war, unless the question of Pakistan is settled. There is no other solution of the Indian Problem." [*Eastern Times*, 31-10-46.]

In a broadcast to the United States from London, Mr. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, President of the All India Muslim League, declared :

"The sooner Britain declared its intention of giving effect to Pakistan, the greater the chance of avoiding a terrific disaster." [*C. & M.G.*, 14-12-46.]

Sardar Abdul Rab Nishtar exhorted the Muslims to join the Muslim League National Guards in large numbers and lay the foundation of the future army of Pakistan. [*Eastern Times*, 25-12-46.]

On 24th January, 1947, the "Muslim National Guards" was declared an "unlawful association" under the Criminal Law Amendment Act by the Punjab Government and on a search made in the office of the Muslim National Guards at Lahore, on that day, 1000 steel helmets, and a large quantity of assorted volunteer badges, bearing insignia of dagger, sword and revolver, were recovered by the police, after the Muslim League Provincial leaders at Lahore had resisted the search being made. Important literature, uniforms, heaps of helmets, etc., were also recovered at some other towns in the Punjab when the premises occupied by Muslim National Guards and of Muslim League leaders were searched by the police. [*Eastern Times*, 26-1-47.]

Sardar Shaukat Hayat, Secretary of the Punjab Muslim League, had declared on 18th November, 1946, that the Punjab Muslims would shortly launch a campaign against the then "coalition Ministry" in the province and would not rest content until they had overthrown it. The arrests of the Muslim leaders of the Punjab on resistance offered at the search of the office of Muslim National Guards on 24th January, 1947, provided the opportunity therefor. [*Eastern Times*, 19-11-46.]

On 25th January, 1947, the Muslim League Assembly Party in a meeting to which Mr. Ghazanfar Ali, a member of the Interim Government, had been specially invited, decided to defy the ban on taking out processions and display of Muslim League National Guard badges and flags. The meeting was attended by about 50 League Members

of Legislative Assembly. It was stated that the meeting decided to violate the ban throughout the Province, and secret instructions to that effect were stated to have been issued to Muslim League organisations throughout the province. [*Tribune*, 26-1-47.] Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan, ex-Minister, who led the first batch of Muslim Leaguers, said :

"The Khizar Ministry must be made to go, no matter what the cost to the Muslim League. We would put out 15 million Muslims to break the law." [*Tribune*, 3-2-47.]

On 26th January, 1947, the Punjab Government removed the ban on the carrying of the flags which were used by the Muslim League National Guards and released the Muslim League leaders. [*Tribune*, 29-1-47.] On 28th January, 1947, the Punjab Government withdrew its order declaring Muslim National Guards as an unlawful association [*Tribune*, 11-2-47.] But the Punjab Provincial Muslim League leaders decided to continue their agitation against the ban on meetings and processions. The Muslim League processionists now began to invade the District Courts and did not spare even the High Court, where tear gas had to be used to disperse them. Union Jack was pulled down from the High Court and Muslim League flag was hoisted there at. [*Tribune*, 18-2-47.] Muslim Leaguers held demonstrations outside jails also in defiance of the ban. They assembled at the Government Secretariat Gate at Lahore and insisted on saying prayers on the roadway. Their conduct at times became violent.

On 17th February, the Hindus and Sikhs at Amritsar held a meeting where considerable indignation was expressed at the conduct of Muslim Leaguers in blackening the faces of two Sikhs and a Hindu tonga drivers who had refused to participate in the *Hartal* proclaimed by the Muslim Leaguers. Although the processions were becoming very rowdy and unruly at times throughout the province, yet only token arrests, if at all, were made. There was considerable interference with mail trains and others which obliged the Railway authorities to put into operation Railway Internal Security Scheme in Lahore Area, despite which trains were stopped and villagers boarded the trains with impunity. Brickbats and other missiles were thrown at police officers on duty. Jail Gates were attacked at places and several warders received injuries. [*Tribune*, 19-2-47.]

Muslim League women demonstrators attacked even the Government House Gate at Lahore on 19th February. A mob of about 7000 forced an entrance into Gujrat Courts and had to be dispersed by tear

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gas. The authorities had to protect the Courts with barbed wires. In the meanwhile negotiations were going on between the Punjab League leaders in jail through Mr. Nazim-ud-Din, Member All India Muslim League Working Committee, and the Punjab Government for a settlement. [*Hindustan Times*, 21-2-47.] On 21st February, a mob tried to storm the jail at Sialkot which, on being dispersed, threw stones at the Police resulting in injuries to 10 constables and one Assistant Sub Inspector of Police. In Rohtak, after Friday prayers, there was a procession of about 12,000 persons headed by Muslim League Volunteers. Similarly there was a procession of about 3000 persons, after Friday prayers, in Mianwali. On 23rd February, about 100 persons came from Okara to attend a meeting at Montgomery and caused a lot of trouble in the train by repeatedly pulling the communication cord. [*Tribune*, 23-2-47.] On 24th February, one constable and one Muslim demonstrator died in a melee between the police and the Muslim League demonstrators who were sought to be dispersed. A Sub Inspector of Police had to open fire when he received injuries due to stone throwing. The frontal bone of Additional District Magistrate of Amritsar was fractured in the above mentioned melee. Batches of Muslims were stopping tongas at Lahore. [*Tribune*, 25-2-47.] On 26th February, 1947, a settlement was arrived at between the Muslim League leaders in the province and the Punjab Government. The Leaguers who had been arrested were released and the League agitation was called off. [*Tribune*, 27-2-47.]

The next phase of the 'Direct Action' plan of the Muslim League was witnessed in the recent disturbances in several districts of the Punjab and North West Frontier Province. By way of illustration the happenings in Rawalpindi District, specially the rural areas, may be reviewed in brief :

Rawalpindi district comprises of about 2000 square miles. It is divided into four Tehsils, viz., Rawalpindi, Gujarkhan, Kahuta and Murree. The greatest length of the district is 68 miles and the greatest breadth is about 48 miles, 90% of the population in the rural areas of the district is Muslim, the remaining being Sikhs and Hindus.

For two or three years past, and particularly from the time the Cabinet Mission Delegation came to India, Muslim League leaders and Muslim students have been propagating the Muslim League's cry of Islam in danger and for Pakistan in these rural areas. A large meeting of the Muslim military men of Mandra, Rawalpindi, was held on Saturday the 30th March, 1946, as reported by Secretary of the Muslim

League, Mandra, to the *Dawn* wherein, inter alia the following resolution was passed.

"We are waiting the final call of Qaed-e-Azam and will lead the battle of Pakistan under his Command. We led two different wars in Africa, Europe and Asia for British Government. (Our Tahsil Gujarknan has a record in recruitment all over India.) But now we will die in the battle of Pakistan." [*Dawn*, 6-4-46.]

There is no Hindu or Sikh living in the Tahsil of Gujarkhan except in the town of Gujarkhan and the villages of Sukho and Daulat-tala (the only three places where the attack of Muslim hordes was repulsed by the Sikhs and Hindus). Sikhs and Hindus, males and females and children, have either been killed or converted or escaped as refugees. Several thousand Muslims led by demobilised Military men and others systematically invaded all the villages, whether sparsely or predominantly, inhabited by Sikhs and Hindus mostly in the week commencing with Friday (the prayer day of Muslims) the 7th March, 1947, looted every thing they could carry on their shoulders or on the backs of camels, donkeys, etc., belonging to Sikhs and Hindus, burnt their houses, shops and places of worship. Those who attempted to defend their homesteads or places of worship, where for greater apparent security they sought refuge in common, were mercilessly shot, massacred, butchered, or burnt alive. Those men, women or children, who refused to be converted to Mo'ammadanism, were brutally tortured and killed or burnt alive. Small children were thrown in burning oil and roasted alive. About 150 villages were thus raided by Muslim invaders who came with beating of drums and shouting *Muslim League Zindabad, Pakistan Zindabad*, etc., and carrying very often Muslim League flags. Only those houses were spared which adjoined houses of Muslims in the villages, who had hoisted Muslim League flags prior to the raid and whose proprietorship was known to the local Muslim villagers who were participating in the rapine, arson, rape and abduction of females. Similar was the fate of Sikhs and Hindus, males, females and children, in the other tahsils of Rawalpindi. About 2500 persons have been butchered in the rural areas within a fortnight against the Government's eviction policy. Mr. Mazahir, *Salar-i-Suba*, earlier had also disclosed the plan which was prepared to enrol two and a half million Muslim National Guards by the end of 1947. According to the Working Committee of the All India Muslim League (Karachi Resolution) :

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"The National Guard functions under Muslim League discipline and control and form part of the Muslim League organisation."

After the "Muslim League National Guards had been declared an unlawful association under the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1908, by the Punjab Government on 24-1-47, the notification made in this behalf was cancelled on the ground that the Muslim National Guards was part and parcel of Muslim League organisation. All the Provincial Governments are in possession of ample proofs of the fact that the Muslim League is an association which encourages and aids persons to commit acts of violence or intimidation, or of which the members habitually commit such acts. Muslim League interferes and has for its object interference with the administration of the law or with the maintenance of law and peace.

On the basis of the submissions made above, it is prayed that after being satisfied to the above effect, Your Excellency, the Governor General in Council, should, by notification in the Gazette of India, declare the All-India Muslim League (along with the Provincial Muslim League in each province, as well as, the Muslim League National Guards) an unlawful association under sections 15 and 16 of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1908, throughout the whole of the British India.

I beg to remain,  
Your most obedient servant,  
Sd/- Narotam Singh,  
Advocate, High Court

14, Edwards Road,  
Lahore, 10-5-1947.

## History in Panjabi

GANDA SINGH

The language and literature of the Panjab is as old as the existence of the spoken and written word in the land. It might not then have been called Panjabi as the word had not yet been coined. The oldest name of the land was Sapt-Sindhu, followed by Panj-nad, which with the advent of the Persian-speaking people came to be called the Panjab (Panj+ab), the land of the five-rivers. The late Professor Teja Singh in one of his essays claimed and argued on etymological grounds that the earliest known book, the *Rigveda*, was written in the then language of the Panjab where the earliest Aryans had at first come and settled down peacefully on the banks of its rivers. The rivers Saraswati and Drishadwati have a very prominent place in the *Nadi-Stuti* section of the Veda and were considered to be very sacred by the early Aryan *rishis*. It was on the banks of these rivers that their scholarly class, the Brahmans, established themselves in hermitages and engaged themselves in literary and philosophical pursuits. And it was here that their saints and sages composed and sang the Vedic hymns and laid the foundation of the earliest literature in the country. Poetry was their main vehicle of expression and it continued to hold its sway through thousands of years that followed. The Jain and Nath Jogis also wrote their works in *shlokas*. The Muslim divines and Sufis too, like Shaikh Farid-dn-Din Masud *Ganj-i-Shakar*, who began preaching to the people of the Panjab the message of the Prophet of Arabia in the sixth and seventh Hijri centuries, also used the poetical medium of expression. The Sikh Gurus and Gosain saints also composed their hymns in verses of different meters. Except for the Sikh hagiographical literature written in prose here and there during the seventeenth century A. D., the art of prose-writing in Panjabi had not much developed up to the third quarter of the nineteenth century. This explains why most of the historical works also were written in verse. The autobiographical memoir, the *Apani Katha*, of Guru Gobind Singh, which forms a part of his *Bachittar Natak*, and is, perhaps, the first of its kind in Indian literature, was also written in different *Chhands*, *Chaupeis* and *dohras*. The scholars in the literary durbar of the Guru Gobind Singh at Anandpur and Paonta, at the

foot of the Shivalak Hills, also wrote their works—original and translations—in verse. The same tradition continued during the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries.

A new era began in the Panjab with the beginning of the eighteenth century. A new chapter then began to be written in its history. A will to resist tyranny—social, religious and political—had been created in the Sikhs, and a new life had been infused in them. The tenth and the last Guru, Gobind Singh, was still living, preparing his people, through precept and example, for the *dharmayudh* that seemed to him to be inevitable in the years to come. For this purpose, he not only had composed heroic poetry himself but had also translated into Panjabi choicest pieces from the ancient Indian literature as he tells us at the end of his chapter on *Krishnavtar*, 2491-92, in the *Bachittar Natak* in the *Dasam Granth* :

ਦਸਮ ਕਥਾ ਭਾਗੌਤ ਕੀ ਭਾਖਾ ਕਰੀ ਬਨਾਇ ।

ਅਵਰ ਬਾਸਨਾ ਨਾਹਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਧਰਮ-ਜੁਧ ਕੇ ਚਾਇ ॥ ੨੪੯੧ ॥

*Dasam katha Bhagaut ki Bhakha kari banaye,*

*Avar basna nahi Prabh, dharam-yudh ke chae.*

And his people rose up to his expectations when they defeated in the summer of 1709, within eight months of his death in October 1708, not only the local levies of the *Amin* of Patti Haibatpur and of the *Chaudhri* of Naushera Pannuan but also the detachments of the provincial army sent to help the latter by Nawab Aslam Khan, the Governor of Lahore. This victory was very significant indeed for the Sikh people because the battles had been thrust upon them and they had to defend themselves with much inferior numbers and no equipment of war worth the name. They had also no trained leader to guide them. Guru Gobind Singh had died in the far off Deccan and Banda Singh had not yet arrived. They had only the word of the Guru to inspire them. Poet Darshan who has described this event in his *Var Amritsar Ki*, written soon after, says :

ਕਹੁ ਜੀ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਕਿਆ ਪਰਵਾਹ ਤਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਕੁ,

ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਿਰਿ ਸਾਇਆ ॥੧੧॥

*Kauh ji Darshan kia parwah tinhan ku,*

*Guru Gobind Singh Sir saya.*

But what anxiety was there for those, says Darshan,  
Who had the shelter of Guru Gobind Singh (to protect them).  
Within a couple of years of this event was written in 1711 A.D. the



*Sri Gur Sobha* by Chandar Sen popularly known as poet Sainapat. Technically speaking, it is a book of eulogy. But as the poet sees the greatness of the Guru through the events of his life, to which he was himself an eye-witness, he does not indulge in hyperbole or jugglery of words to paint an imaginary picture of his subject. The *Sri Gur Sobha*, therefore, is a very reliable piece of history.

The *Hukam-name* or letters of the Sikh Gurus, Banda Singh and of the widows of Guru Gobind Singh, written in prose, addressed to *Sikh Sangats* in different places in the Panjab and outside at times briefly refer to contemporary historical events. These have recently been published by the Punjabi University, Patiala, and the S.G.P.C., Amritsar.

The only prose work of this period written in 1765 B.K. (1708-09 A.D.) is *Parchian Sewa Das* which contains fifty stories of the Guru period. The *Jang-namah Bhangani* and *Bhera Sri Guru Gobind Singh ka* by anonymous authors and the *Jangnamah Sri Guru Gobind Singh* by the Guru's court-poet Ani Rai have described the battles fought by the Guru against the Shivalak Hill chiefs and Government detachments. Ani Rai was an eye-witness to the events described by him. These works, however, are known more for their literary value and poetical descriptions.

There is no contemporary Panjabi account of the life and exploits of Banda Singh, the first political leader and military commander of the Sikhs. The reason is not far to seek. Within a year and a half of his arrival in the south eastern Panjab from the Deccan, the imperial Mughal armies arrived under the command of Emperor Bahadur Shah himself and drove out Banda Singh from his newly conquered areas. The Mughal empire was yet too strong for the rising power of the Sikhs. On the 10th of December, 1710 (29th Shawwal, 1122 Hijri), the Emperor issued an edit ordering a wholesale massacre of the Sikhs—the worshippers of Nanak—wherever found, saying: *Nanak-prastan ra har ja ki ba-yab and ba-qatl rasanand* [*Akhbar-i-Darbar-i-Mualla*]. This order was repeated by Emperor Farrukh Siyar in almost the same words. 'To give effect to this mandate, a reward was offered for the head of every Sikh', says John Malcolm. Thousands of Sikhs fell under the executioner's sword at Lahore. Many of them had to seek shelter in deserts, jungles and mountains. This continued for some thirty five years, followed by decades of their life-and-death struggle with the Afghan usurpers

in the Panjab. There is yet another reason for the absence of non-Muslim Panjabi literature of this period. Bhai Ratan Singh Bhangu tells us in his *Prachin Panth Prakash*, pp. 395, 377-78, that during the governorship of Shah Nawaz Khan (1747-48), his Diwan, Lakhpatri Rai of Eminabad, ordered the destruction of all Sikh books—*Granth*s and *pothis*—wherever found.

Only two works of this period that have survived and have come down to us are Bhai Mani Singh's (i) *Gian Ratanavali Janamsakhi Guru Nanak Ji di*, and (ii) *Bhagat Ratnavali*, also known as *Sikhan di Bhagat-Mal*. These belong to the hagiographic class of prose literature written before 1734 when Bhai Mani Singh was cut to pieces limb by limb (June 24, 1734) under the order of Nawab Zakariya Khan, governor of Lahore. An account of the martyrdom of this scholar-saint is available in Sewa Singh Bhatt's *Shahid Bilas* written in verse in the first half of the nineteenth century. It is based on the Bhatt's family records of the eighteenth century.

The earliest account of the martyrdom of Haqiqat Rai (January 18, 1735) for his refusal to abjure his faith was recorded by poet Aggra in about 1784.

Najabat's *Nadir Shah di Var* contains an account of Nadir's invasion of India in 1739, with particular reference to the events in the Panjab and the battle of Karnal with which it comes to an end. The ballad is a very stirring piece of poetry and is full of patriotic sentiment with contempt for the cowardly behaviour of the governor of Lahore, Zakariya Khan Bahadur, who had quietly submitted to the hateful foreigner.

In his overflowing patriotism and love for the Panjab, Nijabat rises above all religious considerations and, in the words of Abdul Ghafur Qureshi (*Panjabi Zaban da Adab te Tarikh*, p. 290), he looks upon the aggressive Muslim hordes of Nadir Shah's invading army as *kafirs* and upon the defending army of the Panjab, consisting both of Muslims and Hindus, as the army of the valiant *Hadhrat* Ali. Still stronger condemnation of the Mughal rulers of India; their Turani officers, gunners and archers, and of the Indian Rajas, etc., during the invasion of Nadir Shah is found in the second twelve-line 'be' stanza of the Miscellaneous Verses and in the third stanza of the sixth *siharfi* of Sayyed Ali Haidar's *Kulliyat-i-Ali Haidar* edited by Dr. Faqir Muhammad, pp. 8, 34. Therein he refers to them as shameless cowards for their failure to defend the country against the Persian invader. The stanza runs as follows :

ਬੇ ਭੀ ਜ਼ਹਿਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਜੋ ਖਾ ਮਰਨ ਕੁਝ ਸ਼ਰਮ ਨਾ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ  
 ਕੀ ਹੋਇਆ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਰਾਜਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਕੁਝ ਲੱਜ ਨਹੀਂ ਤੁਰਾਨੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ  
 ਭੈੜੇ ਭਰ ਭਰ ਦੇਵਣ ਖ਼ਜ਼ਾਨੇ ਫ਼ਾਰਸੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਖ਼ਰਾਸਾਨੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ  
 ਵਿਚ ਫ਼ੂਹਣੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਪਾਣੀ ਨੱਕ ਬੋੜੇ ਜੇ ਲਹੋ ਨਾ ਵੱਡਿਆਂ ਪਾਣੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ  
 ਹਿੱਕੇ ਤਾਂ ਖਾ ਕਟਾਰੀ ਮਰਦੇ ਜੇ ਸਕੇ ਨਾ ਮਾਰ ਈਰਾਨੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ  
 ਡਾੜ੍ਹੀਆਂ ਚਾ ਮੁਨਾਈਆਂ ਆਖੇ ਹੈਫ਼ ਏ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਜ਼ਨਾਨੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ  
 ਤੋਪਚੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਜੰਬੂਰਚੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਬਰਕੰਦਾਜ਼ਾਂ ਬਾਣੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ  
 ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਬਾਂਕਿਆਂ ਟੇਵਿਆਂ ਡਿੰਗਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਤੁਰਕੀਆਂ ਆਕੜਖਾਨੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ  
 ਨੇਕ ਬੰਦਾਂ ਦੱਖਣੀ ਜਾਮੇ ਬਾਂਕੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਅੱਖੜ ਪੋਸ਼ ਕਮਾਨੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ  
 ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਪਲੱਠੀ-ਬਾਜ਼ਾਂ ਬਜ਼ਾਰੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਫ਼ੀਲ-ਕੱਦਾਂ ਅਫ਼ਗ਼ਾਨੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ  
 ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਤਿੱਬਤੀ ਕਿਸ਼ਤੀਗੀਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਤੀਰ-ਅੰਦਾਜ਼ ਗੁਮਾਨੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ  
 ਹੈਦਰ ਆਖੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਹੀਜ਼ੜਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਹੀਜ਼ਾਂ ਨਾਮਰਦਾਨੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ

Referring to the atrocities, massacre and loot, committed by the army of Nadir in Delhi, Ali Haidar says :

ਇਹ ਈਰਾਨੀ ਨਾਦਰ ਜ਼ਾਲਮ ਕੋਂਹਦੇ ਮੂਲ ਨਾ ਸੰਗਦੇ ਨੀ,  
 ਦਿਲ ਦੀ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਲੁੱਟ ਲਈ ਹੈਦਰ ਹੋਰ ਕੀ ਸਾਥੋਂ ਮੰਗਦੇ ਨੀ ॥

The period of the governorship of Mir Mannu (1748-53) is, perhaps, the darkest in the history of the Panjab when even Sikh women and children were seized and imprisoned, and starved and tortured to death in the dark and narrow dungeons in the Landa Bazar of Lahore. But all this persecution failed to depress the Sikhs, as is apparent from the following song of Sikh bravado coming down from those days :

ਮੰਨੂ ਅਸਾਡੀ ਦਾਤਰੀ ਅਸੀਂ ਮੰਨੂ ਦੇ ਸੋਏ ।  
 ਜਿਉਂ ਜਿਉਂ ਮੰਨੂ ਵੱਢਦਾ ਅਸੀਂ ਦੂਣ ਸਵਾਏ ਹੋਏ ॥  
*Mannu Asadi datri asin Mannu de Soe,*  
*Jion jion Mannu wadh-da asin dun Sawae hoe.*  
 Mannu is our sickle,  
 and we are a crop for him to mow.  
 The more he cuts us, the more we grow.

It was during this period, in 1751, that the first detailed account of the life of Guru Gobind Singh was written by Koer Singh in his *Gur-Bilas Patshahi Das*, based, it is said, on the discourses of Bhai Mani Singh and the writings of poet Sainapat and others.

The general persecution of the Sikhs ended with Mannu's death on November 4, 1753. But the Sikhs had to wait for some twelve years more before they could drive out the Durrani, establish them-

selves as undisputed masters of the cis-Sutlej area and conquer Lahore in 1764-65.

Sayyad Bulhe Shah (1680-1758), a Sufi saint of cosmopolitan outlook, was one of the truest representative of Panjabi character in his outspoken God-orientedness which recognised no distinction between Krishna (the *makhan-chor*), Shahji (Inayat-shah, the *murshid* of Bulhe Shah), a *Qazi* in a mosque or Tegg Bahadur *ghazi* (the martyred ninth of the Sikhs. He has drawn a realistic picture of the socio-religious life of the people of his days and has exposed the hypocritical Mullas and Brahmans who exploited their simple and unsuspecting folk in the name of religion. Bulhe Shah also bemoans in *kafi* No. 69 the pitiable condition of the Panjab to which it had been reduced under the later Mughals, particularly during the invasions of Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Durrani, and says in *Kafi* No. 65 that God in His Will then raised the coarse-blanket-wearers to kingship and put an end to the rule of the the Mughals when :

ਜਦੋਂ ਆਪਣੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਪੈ ਗਈ । ਧੀ ਮਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਲੁੱਟ ਕੇ ਲੈ ਗਈ ॥  
ਦਰ ਖੁੱਲ੍ਹਾ ਹਜ਼ਰ ਅਜ਼ਾਬ ਦਾ । ਬੁਰਾ ਹਾਲ ਹੋਇਆ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦਾ ॥

*Jadon apni apni pai gei,  
Dhi man nu lutt ke lai gei,  
Dar khullha hashar azab da,  
Bura hal hoya Panjab da. (Kafi 69)*

When everyone had only to look to himself,  
and the daughter robbed away her mother,

The gate of many-fold pains and punishments came to be opened,  
and the Panjab was reduced to a miserable plight.

ਮੁਗਲਾਂ ਜ਼ਹਿਰ ਪਿਆਲੇ ਪੀਤੇ । ਭੂਰੀਆਂ ਵਾਲੇ ਰਾਜੇ ਕੀਤੇ ॥  
ਸਭ ਅਸ਼ਰਾਫ਼ ਫਿਰਨ ਚੁਪ ਕੀਤੇ । ਭਲਾ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਝਾੜਿਆ ਈ ॥

*Mughlan zaihar piale pite, Bhuriyan wale raje kite,  
Sabh ashraf phiran chup kite, Bhala unhan nu jharia-ee. (Kafi 65)*

The Mughals drank the cups of poison;  
The coarse-blanket-wearers were raised to be *rajas* (rulers).  
The Mughal nobles are all wandering about in silence,  
Well have they been swept off !

This refers to the establishment of the Sikh power in the Panjab on the debris of the fallen Mughal structure during the sixth and seventh decades of the eighteenth century.

The biographies of *Banda Singh Bahadur*, *Maharaja Kauara Mall Bahadur* and *Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia* by Ganda Singh may also be referred to for the activities of the Sikhs during this period

A period of comparative peace now set in the Panjab and the expansion of the Sikh rule began on all sides. The heroic struggle of the Chatthas of Rasul Nagar against the expansion of Sukkarchakkia Sardar Maha Singh in their area has been described at some length by Pir Muhammad of Nonawali, district Gujrat, in his *Chatthian di Var* written in mid-nineteenth century on the basis of information of contemporary and semi-contemporary sources. There is in it, no doubt, a considerable element of imagination and exaggeration, not unnatural to ballads, yet it is a mine of useful historical information for the period 1764-1791.

Kesar Singh Chhibbar in his *Bansavali Nama Dasam Patshahian ka*—a genealogical account of the ten Gurus—claims to have based his account of the Gurus, particularly of the Tenth Guru, on a *bahi*, a record book, of the time of the Tenth Guru, in possession of his ancestors. But, with the passage of time of over seven decades and the growing weakness of his memory and the dimness of his eyesight, in addition to the disarrangement of the leaves of the manuscript which had come to be torn into pieces by the children of the house, the order and arrangements of events had come to be confused by 1779-1780 (1836 Bk.), when he reset it in order. According to another copy, the *Bansavali Nama* was completed in 1826 Bk. (1769-70). To a discerning research scholar, well-versed in the chronology of the period, the book is full of useful information about such of the events up to about 1756 as he has recorded on personal observation or first-hand knowledge.

It was during this period that two important works on the lives of the Sikh Gurus were written under the title of *Mahima Prakash*, one in poetry by Sarup Das Bhalla in 1776 and the other in prose by Kirpal Singh. The exact date of the composition of latter work is not known. Although both of them belong to the hagiographical class, the prose work is nearer to history. The two works known as the *Gurbilas* also belong to the last three decades of the eighteenth century. The *Gurbilas Patshahi Chhevin* (the Sixth Guru Hargobind) by poet Sohan was completed in 1775 and the *Gurbilas Dasam Patshahi* (the tenth Guru Gobind

Singh) by poet Bhai Sukha Singh in 1797.

We have not yet come across any Punjabi account of the efforts of Taimur Shah, son of Ahmad Shah Durrani, to regain the territories conquered by the Sikhs. His son Zaman Shah, however, led four campaigns against the Panjab in 1793, 1795, 1796 and 1798. On his return to Afghanistan in February 1797, he left behind him his general Ahmad Khan *Shahangchi-bashi*, popularly known as Shahanchi Khan, as governor of the Sindh-Sagar Doab. He turned out to be an unscrupulous tyrant. The fourteen-stanza *Fateh Namah* by Bhai Dayal Singh describes the battle fought between the Afghans under Sardar Ahmad Khan Shahangchi and the Sikhs under Sardar Sahib Singh of Gujrat on Baisakh 22, 1854 Bikrami, April 30, 1797. Shahangchi was killed in the battle with victory for the Sikhs.

The final departure of Shah Zaman from Lahore in the first week of January 1799 closed for ever the chapter of north-western invasions of India, and Sardar Ranjit Singh, invited by a joint deputation of the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh representatives of the capital, occupied Lahore in the first week of July. With this opened a new era in the history of the Panjab, when, after several centuries, the sons of soil became the masters of their homeland.

The eighteenth century was a period of great strains and stresses for the people of the Panjab—of long struggles with the ruling juntoos and of continuous invasions from the north-west. The Sikhs had, in particular, been the targets of persecution and suppression. They had, therefore, very little time and opportunities for the development of literary tastes and traditions. For over a hundred years they had perforce been driven to the use of sword. They could not take to the use of pen overnight with their rise to political power under Maharaja Ranjit Singh. As of old, therefore, the official language of the government continued to be Persian which alone was taught in regular schools. Panjabi was taught only in the Sikh temple-schools, of which there were not many. Moreover, military career had become more attractive for the adventuresome Sikh youngmen. As such, most of the works of Panjabi literature in the first half of the nineteenth century, when the Sikhs ruled in the Panjab, was done by Muslim saints and scholars who used their facile pens more for the propagation of Islamic knowledge. Poet Hashim, the author of *Sassi Punnu*, *Sohni Mahiwal*, *Diwan Hashim*, etc., etc., wrote during the early years of the Maharaja's reign a ballad on his father known as *Sardar Maha*

*Singh di Var*. But it seems to have been lost for ever with the death on July 30, 1962, of Lala Sita Ram Kohli with whom I once saw a copy of it.

The only work of any importance bearing on the life of Maharaja Ranjit Singh written about the year 1831 is *Fateh Namah Guru Khalsaji Ka* by Ganesh Das. It gives an account of the battles of Multan (1818), Tiri Hill near Nowshera (1823) and Saidewal near Akora (1826) fought by him. Jafar Beg's *Baintan Sarkar Ranjit Singh Kian* describes the last days of the Maharaja and his death on June 27, 1839.

Sardar Hari Singh Nalwa is known to history as the bravest general of the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. His loyalty to the Maharaja and daring in the fields of action, particularly on the north-western frontier of India, won for him the admiration of all who happened to know him. He is the subject of three ballads written by contemporary poets, Ramdial Anand (*Fateh-Nama*), Sahai Singh (*Var Hari Singh Ki*) and Qadir Yar Sandhu of Machhike in the district of Sheikhpura (*Var Sardar Hari Singh*). The last named is the well known author of the *Mehraj-nama*, *Raja Rasalu*, *Puran Bhagat*, etc. So popular became the name of the poet Qadir Yar for his heroic and soul-stirring verses that one Missar Hari Chand of Dalwal, in Jhelum district, felt allured in the late teens or early twenties of the present century to adopt 'Qadir Yar' as his *Nom de plume* and wrote under it six acrostics known as *Siharfian Hari Singh Nalwa*.

The unhappy state of affairs, after the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh on June 27, 1839, created by conspiracies and counter-conspiracies among the courtiers of Lahore resulting in the murder of the Maharaja Sher Singh on September 15, 1843, at the hands of his own collaterals, is given in *Baintan Sher Singh Kian* by a contemporary and an eye-witness poet Nihal Singh. The *Maharaja Sher Singh Prakash* by Sadhu Amir Das also deals with the same subject.

Maharaja Sher Singh was succeeded by Maharaja Duleep Singh, the youngest son of Ranjit Singh. It was during his short reign that the two Anglo-Sikh wars were fought in 1845-46 and 1848-49 and the Panjab was annexed by the British East India Company to their Indian dominions. And thus came to an end the rule of the Sikhs in the Panjab. Among the poets who have described the first War, Shah Muhammad is the most popular for his patriotic fervour and stirring verses. His *Kissa Angrezan te Singhan di Larai* has run into several editions in Persian and Gurmukhi scripts. The second spirited account

of this war—*Jang Singhan te Farangian da*—is by poet Matak. Only a fragment of it has so far been discovered and printed. Kahan Singh of Banga wrote his *Jang-nama Lahore* at the instance of Mr. Vansittart, the first British Deputy Commissioner of the Jullundur district after the annexation of the Jullundur Doab. The booklet is full of details with occasional praiseful references to the new rulers of the land.

An account of the second war, with particular reference to the rebellion of *Diwan* Mul Raj of Multan in 1848-49, is given in a ballad by a Baloch poet Sobha, son of Farid of Wahi Tajewala, in Shujabad tehsil of the district of Multan. The writer is very much prejudiced against the *Diwan* whom he calls a *dhoti-banh karar* or a *dhoti*-wearing Hindu shopkeeper, while he looks upon the British as *Ahl-i-kitab* or 'the People of the Book' brought to country by God. Another account of this campaign of Multan, according to Sita Ram Kohli, was written by a contemporary Panjabi poet Hakim Chand. When Mul Raj was vacillating, says this balladist, his mother castigated him bitterly for having given up the government of a province which his father had held for a quarter of a century. This, might have moved the *Diwan* to join the revolt, says Mr. Kohli.

It was during the fifth decade of the nineteenth century that two great works of Panjabi poetry were completed by Bhangu Ratan Singh and Kavi Santokh Singh. The first of them was the *Prachin Panth Prakash* (1841). Its author Ratan Singh was a grandson of Sardar Mehtab Singh of Miran-kot and, on the mother's side, of Sardar Shyam Singh of Karor-Singhia *Misal*. Both of these Sardars were leaders of the Dal Khalsa and, as such, the author had from his own ancestors, and others connected with them, first-hand information about the sufferings and sacrifices of the Sikhs in the first half of eighteenth century, the formation of the *Dals*, *Jathas* and *Misals* and their struggles, exploits and conquests which ultimately led to the independence of the Punjab and the establishment of the Sikh republics. But for his prejudice against Banda Singh and some of his supporters, which he had inherited from the leaders of the early opposition party, and a few minor errors, the *Prachin Panth Prakash* may be said to be a very reliable source of history of the eighteenth century Panjab. Ratan Singh was not much of a poet with creative imagination with the happy result that his narration of events has remained uncoloured and objective to a very great extent.

Poet Santokh Singh's *Gur-Pratap Suraj Granth*, popularly known



as the *Suraj Parkash*, giving the lives of the Sikh Gurus, is a marvel of poetical composition not only in its volume but also in its richness. Its fourteen-volume edition of 1926-37 by Bhai Vir Singh covers as many as 6394 large-size pages. It mostly sings the glories of the great Gurus and is one of the best example of hagiographical literature in Braj-bhasha and Panjabi.

Of the Sikh States that escaped being annexed by the East India Company, only Kapurthala and Patiala seem to have attracted the attention of writers whose works have come down to us. Ram Sukh Rao has written extensively on the lives of Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia (1718-83), the founder of the Kapurthala house, and his two successors Sardar Bhag Singh (1747-1801) and Sardar Feteah Singh (1784-1836). His works *Jassa Singh Binod*, *Bhag Singh Chandrodya* and *Sri Fateh Singh Pratap Prabhakar* have been of considerable help to Diwan Ram Jas in the writing of his *Tarikh-i-Khandan-i-alishan-i-Sarkar Ahluwalia Wali-i-Kapurthala*, 1865, and *Tawarikh-i-Kapurthala*, 1897 (two volumes).

As early as the reign of Maharaja Amar Singh (1765-1782), the grandson and successor of Baba Ala Singh of Patiala, a number of Persian, Braji and Panjabi writers were attracted to Patiala. Kesho Das' *Var Raja Amar Singh Ki* is an account of the Maharaja's victory over the Bhattis at Fatehabad and of the occupation of the fort of Sirsa. Two great works on the Sikh Gurus, the *Singh Sagar*, also called *Gobind Singh Prakash*, and the *Gur Kirat Prakash* by Vir Singh Ball of Sathiala were written at Patiala in 1828 and 1834 respectively during the time of Maharaja Karam Singh. His successor Maharaja Narinder Singh patronised poet Bhai Nihal who composed in 1853 *Katha Raje Phul Ki* or an account of Phul, the ancestor of the Phulkian families of Patiala, Nabha and Jind. In 1857, poet Bhagwan Singh of Banoor wrote the story of the family under the title of *Rajnama Sarkar-i-wala Patiala*, also called the *Kursi-nama*. Madan Singh of Sangrur also wrote on the same subject and called his book *Phul-bans Prakash*. Another *Phul-bans Prakash* is by poet Sahib Singh.

The Indian Mutiny finds its echo in poet Khazan Singh's *Jang Nama Dilli* written in 1915 Bikrami, 1858 A.D., when the Sikh States and the people of the Panjab helped the East India Company reconquer Delhi from the mutineers of the Bengal Army and re-establish their power in northern India. The reasons for this help are not far to seek. Only a decade earlier, it was the Bengal Army,

recruited mostly from the Provinces of Agra and Oudh, that had helped the British in 1845-46 and 1848-49 in subjugating the Panjab which was then the only independent kingdom in India. The people of the Panjab—Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs—were only looking for a chance to wreak their vengeance upon their erstwhile enemies. Secondly, the Sikhs could not for obvious reasons be persuaded to espouse the cause of the Mughal empire sought to be re-established in India. Their ancestors had suffered at the hands the Mughals for over a century and a half and had faced general massacres of their community under the imperial mandates to kill the Sikhs wherever found—issued on December 10, 1710, by Emperor Bahadur Shah and repeated by Emperor Farrukh Siyar—as mentioned earlier. Moreover, the National War of Independence is only a misnomer for the Indian Mutiny coined as a part of political propaganda indulged in by those who do not belong to the discipline of objective history.

The preachings of Baba Ram Singh Namdhari, popularly known as Kooka, during eighteen sixties and the establishment, in the seventies and eighties, of the Singh Sabhas, which soon developed into a revivalist movement among the Sikhs, gave a new incentive to writing in Punjabi. It was only through the medium of this language that the revivalists could educate their masses in the puritanical ideas of their faith and warn them against the wrong practices that had crept into their society. This brought into the field a number of Panjabi prose writers like Giani Ditt Singh, Bhai Gurmukh Singh, Bhai Amar Singh, Attar Singh and others who wrote extensively on the religion and history of the Sikhs with a view to guarding against their gradual absorption into the Hindus, particularly the Arya Samaj, which had then launched forth a vigorous anti-Sikh propaganda through press and platform. The most important work bearing on the history of the Sikh Gurus, sufferings of the Sikhs during the first half of the eighteenth century, their struggle against the Afghans, their rise to power under the Sikh confederacies and Maharaja Ranjit Singh and the fall of the Sikh kingdom in 1849, was written in verse in the early eighteen-eighties by Giani Gian Singh under the title of *Panth Prakash*. This was later elaborated in prose by the author himself as the *Tawarikh Guru Khalsa* in three big volumes, separately called the *Janamsakhi*, the *Shamsher Khalsa* and the *Raj Khalsa*, published in 1891-94. The *Tawarikh* has run into several editions and has also been translated into Urdu under the same titles.

It was under the influence of the Singh Sabha movement that the well known poet of his day, Bhai Sumer Singh *mahant* of the Takht Harmandar Sahib of Patna city in Behar, wrote in 1881 his *Sri Gur Pad Prem Prakash* or *Pothi Gur-bilas Das Patshahi Ki* on the life and work of Guru Gobind Singh.

The part played by the Sikh regiments of the Indian Army in the fighting in Afghanistan during the Second Afghan War (Kabul and Kandahar) in 1878-79-80, and on the North-Western Frontier and in Chitral and Malakand towards the end of the nineteenth century has been recorded at some length in poetical compositions or *Kissas* of the participating Sikh soldiers and officers like *Kavi Karam Singh* (*Jang Nama Kabul*, Second Afghan War), Bhai Labh Singh (*Jang Mulkh Tirah*), Sepoy Sobha Singh (*Jang Tirah*), Bhai Gurdit Singh (*Jang Tirah Wadda*), Mistri Gopal Singh (*Jang Chitral* and *Jang Nama Malakand*), Subedar Wadhawa Singh (*Jang Muhim Chitral*), Bhai Kehar Singh (*Jang Chitral*), etc., etc.

The impulse of the Singh Sabha movement inspired, in the beginning of the eighteen nineties, one of the greatest devotees of Panjabi language and literature, Bhai Vir Singh of Amritsar. Born ~~on~~ December 5, 1872, he began his active participation in the movement in 1892 and took to writing in Panjabi in the following year. In 1894 he founded the Khalsa Tract Society for the propagation of Sikh religion and culture and, in 1899, started a weekly newspaper the *Khalsa Samachar* with the same object in view. Bhai Vir Singh was primarily a poet, but his contribution to Panjabi literature in prose, with about a thousand tracts written for the Khalsa Tract Society, a number of novels like *Sundri Bijai Singh* and *Satwant Kaur*, the voluminous works like *Guru Kalgidhar Chamatkar*, *Guru Nanak Chamatkar*, *Asht-Gur Chamatkar*, the annotation of Bhai Santokh Singh's *Gur-Pratap Suraj Granth*, in 14 volumes, and a large number of articles and notes written for the *Khalsa Samachar* and other journals, is more than that of any other writer.

Baba Prem Singh of Hoti, who migrated from the North Western Frontier Province in Pakistan to Patiala after the partition of the Panjab in 1947, deserves a special mention as a writer of popular biographies of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Kanwar Nau-Nihal Singh, Maharaja Sher Singh, General Hari Singh Nalwa, Phula Singh Akali and Nawab Kapur Singh, in addition to a collection of smaller biographies in his *Khalsa Raj de Usraiyye* and *Khalsa Raj de Bidesi Karinde*.

Researchful work in objective history of the Panjab was started by Sardar Karam Singh in the beginning of the twentieth century and was taken up later on by the writer of the present paper.

Considerable work on the Kooka Movement was done by Kala Singh through his poetical works like *Shahid-Bilas Singhan Namdharian*, *Shahid-Bilas Raikot*, *Singhan Namdharian da Panth Prakash* and the *Paintis Akhri*. The other writers on the subject are Dr Indar Singh, the author of the *Jagda Diwa* (in verse), Indar Singh Chakravarti, the author of the *Namdhari Itihas* part I (in prose) and the *Malavinder Bahadur* (in verse), Nidhan Singh Alam of the *Jug-Paltaoo Satguru* and Nahar Singh, M.A., of the *Namdhari Itihas*, Part I. The *Kukian di Vithya* by Dr Ganda Singh, vol. I, published in 1944 and 1946, gives a fairly exhaustive historical account of the Kuka leader, Baba Ram Singh, with sixty of his letters addressed to his brother and followers.

The topical poems of Master Sundar Singh Lyallpuri and Giani Hira Singh 'Dard', editors of the daily *Akali*, published from Amritsar in 1920, stirred the emotions of the Sikh masses who came forward in their thousands to risk their all for reform in the management of the Sikh Gurdwaras. This gave birth to the Akali movement launched by the Shromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee. But the Government of the Panjab took the side of the hereditary custodians of the temples whom the Sikhs wished to replace by democratic elected managing committees. With this, the movement took an anti-Government turn. At this time came into existence the Sikh League, a political body, and the Congress leaders felt induced to support the Akalis. The poems of Giani Hira Singh 'Dard' in book form as the *Dard Sunehe* were eagerly read by the people of the Panjab. So were the poems of Avtar Singh Azad and other poets, a study of which by scholars of history will give some idea of the inner feelings of the reformists.

There are two important works on the Ghadar Movement in the Panjab which had its birth in California, U.S.A., in 1913. One is the *Ghadar Party Lehar* by Jagjit Singh of Tarn-Taran (1955), and the other is Gurcharan Singh Sehnsara's *Ghadar Party da Itihas* (1961), in addition to a number of propaganda pamphlets like the *Ghadar di Goonj* and the *Ghadar* newspaper.

Giani Partap Singh's *Akali Lehar da Itihas*, 1951, Master Tara Singh's *Meri Yad*, 1945, and the *Akali Morche ate Jhabbar*, edited by Narain Singh, 1959, are the only works of any importance on the Gurdwara Reform Movement of 1920-1925, in addition to Gurbakhsh

Singh Shamsher's *Shahidi Jiwan*, 1938, Sardul Singh Kaveeshar's *Saka Nankana Sahib*, 1921, and Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid's *Bhayanak Saka Nankana Sahib* which deal exclusively with the Nankana Sahib incident of February 20, 1921. The *Babar Akali Leher da Itihas* by Sundar Singh Makhdumpuri and the *Babar Lehar Panjab* by Gurbachan Singh, 1950, in addition to the stirring poems of Kishan Singh Gargajj, who excited the people to take to violence in support of their movement, are the only works on the Babar Akali movement, in the Jullundur Doab, against the *jholi chuks* or the skirt-kissers of the Government, as the supporters and spies of the Government against the Akali and other political movements in the country were derisively called.

The biographies of Sardar Sundar Singh Majithia, Dr Bhai Jodh Singh, Dr Bhai Vir Singh, Kartar Singh Updeshak, etc., and the annual reports of the Chief Khalsa Diwan and its Sikh Educational Committee are the best sources on the work and achievements of the Chief Khalsa Diwan in the fields of social reforms and education in the Panjab.

Giani Nahar Singh's *Azadi dian Lehran*, 1959, gives an account of the various movements in the Panjab for the freedom of the country from under the British yoke. The author was himself in jail from 1915 to 1919 in connection with the Ghadar movement of 1914-1915 and he was in close touch with a number of the Ghadarites both inside the jail and outside after their release in the twenties and thirties of the century.

Sohan Singh Sital and Narindar Singh Soch have through their *Panjab da Ujara*, 1955, and *Panjab da Khooni Itihas*, respectively, supplement the account of the partition of the Panjab given in Gurbachan Singh Talib's *Muslim Ligian de Attiachar*, 1947, published by the S.G.P.C. in 1951.

The *Vihvi Sadi de Shahid* by Giani Gurmukh Singh Musafir, published in 1968, contains brief life-sketches of 323 martyrs who, according to the author, laid down their lives in the cause of India's independence during the twentieth century.

The *Panjab (1849-1960)* and the *Dr Bhai Jodh Singh*, which form parts of the *Dr Bhai Jodh Singh Abhinandan Granth*, compiled and edited by the writer of this paper (and published in 1962), deal with the history of the period covered by them. The various chapters of these volumes have been written by experts in their subjects and or by eye-witnesses to the events described therein.

## Foundation of the Khalsa Commonwealth Ideological Aspects

DR FAUJA SINGH\*

With a view to understanding the ideology behind Guru Gobind Singh's Khalsa Commonwealth, it is imperative to consider the following factors :—

1. Ideological basis of the earlier Sikh movement.
2. Conflict with the Mughal State.
3. Guru Gobind Singh's concept of *dharam-yudh*.
4. Code of conduct enjoined upon the Khalsa at the time of its creation.

Guru Nanak and his successors viewed the world as an "abode of God"<sup>1</sup>, an objective reality created and maintained by God and not an illusion or a chimera utterly lacking in meaning and substance. This shaped a positive and humanistic outlook which accepted the world and the human society in it with a full sense of responsibility. Renunciation of worldly life or asceticism found no place in it, but was rather strongly condemned as a dereliction of duty towards fellow-human beings.<sup>2</sup> As against this, exclusive preference was expressed for the organic view of society in which religious, social, economic and political aspects are but integral parts of a single social whole. Central to this view was that one must live inside the society a full and active life, earning one's livelihood<sup>3</sup> and discharging, in a spirit of dedicated social service, all obligations towards one's family, one's neighbours and other members of the society. Such a life would not be, it was emphatically pointed out, a negation or disregard of religion, but rather would be its practising ground or a place of test and trial for religious beliefs. On the other hand, religion, too, would have little meaning if it were divorced from the realities of actual life. Hence, it was urged that the very basis of human life in all its varied forms should be constituted of spiritual and moral

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1. Asa Mahalla 2, *Adi Granth*, p. 463.

2. Bhai Gurdas, *Var I, Pauris* 29, 40.

3. Ghal khae kichh hathon dei, Nanak rah pachhane sei, *Var Sarang, Mohalla* 4

values. As for these values, the greatest stress was laid on God-consciousness, selfless love, truth, honesty, purity, compassion, modesty, public-spiritedness, charitability, detachment, temperateness and tolerance. They, if sincerely practised, would, it was assured, not only give the individual a sense of self-fulfilment, but would also render the world a far better place to live in.

Besides social responsibility and spiritual and moral values, several other principles were commended by the Gurus to the notice of their followers. Of them rationality was urged to keep individual and social life free from the depressing and devitalizing effect of a large body of taboos and superstitions pestering the society. In this respect, the Gurus themselves set a worthy example by subjecting several of them to a critical examination and declaring to be at once senseless and injurious shackles of individual and social life. Life must be free, it was stressed, from all such inhibitions and mechanical practices, if its stream was to flow in freedom and smoothness. The orthodox priesthood that lived by them by invoking for them legal and divine sanction and stood in the way of reform was condemned as a body of parasites and exploiters.

Another principle dear to the heart of the Gurus was equality. Being a natural deduction from their doctrine of universal Fatherhood of God, their concept of equality naturally transcended the narrow or exclusive considerations of creed, caste, clime, sex and colour.<sup>4</sup> All people were considered by them as members of the same human family. It was, thus, much wider in scope than the equality of the *faithfuls* who held all non-members as inferior or the equality of a caste brotherhood who thought low of the whole array of caste groups placed lower down the social hierarchy. The only inequality allowed was the principle of recognizing the elements of mental and physical power and attainments as the basis of individual personality and character. They could think of high and low in terms only of merit;<sup>5</sup> and birth as the basis of social status had no value in their estimation. The religious sanction of birth distinctions was, therefore, unreservedly repudiated as also the widely current notion that there were any divinely ordained classes amongst mankind. Consequently, it was

4. All have sprung from the same light. Hence any distinction between them is wrong. *Parbhati*, Kabir, *Adi Granth*, p. 1349.

5. The status of a person is that which is determined by his deeds. Guru Nanak, *Parbhati*, *Adi Granth*, p. 1330.

declared that the existing institutions of class gradation and untouchability were indefensible and against the will of God.<sup>6</sup> This *secular* view holds the key to the process of social change, for as long as social institutions are regarded as God-ordained, there is no possibility of mending or ending them.

The Gurus rejected the hereditary principle as the basis of social order and unambiguously declared that "class and caste distinctions are just so much nonsense". They also denounced the idea of any social apartheid or inflexibility and advocated social mobility in which people would be free to work out their destiny according to their differing potentialities. That social gradation determines social ethics and civic obligations of individuals was also disavowed. Likewise, the idea of different *dharma*s (codes of conduct) for different caste groups was rejected. The principle of one uniform code for all people, high and low, on the other hand, appealed to them most and was strongly advocated.<sup>7</sup>

As such, in the then prevailing Indian situation, this precept of equality was of great revolutionary import. It sought to equate the Musalman the ruler with the non-Muslim the subject and the Sudra the untouchable with the Brahmin the twice-born. It upheld neither the man-made social barriers that bred exclusiveness and discord nor the disabilities of the womenfolk, a great festering sore, indefensible as much in equality as in justice and rationality.<sup>8</sup> Thus did it render inestimable help in preparing the ground for the growth and development of a new angle of vision that favoured and worked for a sound, healthy, integrated and uninhibited social system.

Fraternity was a kindred as well as an essential concomitant of the principle of equality. It breathed into the complex of human relations the spirit of love, tolerance and catholicity.

The precept of justice figured prominently in the thinking of Guru Nanak and his successors. The scientific socialism as it developed in the west in the 19th century and as we understand it today, was not known then, but justice as a principle of human relations was well known and was by Nanak and his successors strongly advocated. As a matter of fact, their close identification with the lower and down-

6. Guru Nanak, *Sri Rag, Ashtpadi*, 'Varn avarn na bhawni ji kisai wada karae'.

7. Updesh chauh varna ko sanjha. *Adi Granth*, p. 747.

8. Guru Nanak, *Asa di Var, Adi Granth*, p. 473.



trodden classes<sup>9</sup> and their constant endeavours for their welfare and upliftment were conceived in a desire to plead for social justice. Similarly, the exploitation of the poor by the rich was held inhuman and unjust.<sup>10</sup> The concept of justice propounded by the Gurus extended to the political sphere as well, where it was regarded as constituting the very basis of government and administration.

While the actions of perpetrators of exploitation, injustice and tyranny were exposed and criticised and appeals made to their good sense and reason to mend themselves, the sufferers at their hands were exhorted to conduct themselves with self-respect and fearlessness.<sup>11</sup> The cheap and senseless imitation<sup>12</sup> on their part of their rulers' ways, with no other object than that of placating them, was exposed as an act of servility, and passive submission to a tyrant was dubbed an act of shameful cowardice. Compromise with injustice or tyranny was thus shown as a great evil and fearlessness or heroism in resistance to it a great virtue. In this fight between good and evil, God's support, it was assured, would be always on the side of good, for he is verily the smiter of the evil and the wicked<sup>13</sup> and since time immemorial has been the unfailing protector of the good as against their enemies. "In all *Jugas* He has been creating saints and in all *Jugas* has their honour been protected by Him. Harnaksh the tyrant was smashed by Him and Prehlad the victim saved. The arrogant and the foul-tongued were forsaken while favours were showered upon Namdev."<sup>14</sup> Moreover, the ethical principle involved in the fights of the ancient Hindu heroes like Rama and Krishna was accepted. Each one of them had to fight against evil and each one of them gained victory through the

9. Guru Nanak, *Sri Rag, Adi Granth*, p. 15.

10. Guru Nanak, *Var, Majh, Adi Granth*, p. 140.

"If a piece of cloth is stained with blood, it gets polluted. How can a person be pure, if he sucks human blood?"

11. Fear not and frighten not. *Saloks of Guru Teg Bahadur, Adi Granth*, p. 1427.

12. Guru Nanak, *Rag Dhanasri, Adi Granth*, p. 665; *Asa di Var, Adi Granth*, pp. 462-475; Nil vastar pehar hovai parvan. Khatrian dharam chhodia malechh bhakhia gahi.

13. Guru Arjan, *Var Gujri, Adi Granth*, p. 517; "sakat nindak dusht khin mahe bidariyan" (He smites the evil-minded, the ill-tongued and the wicked in a second; Guru Amardas, *Adi Granth*, p. 517; "jo das tere ki ninda kare tis mar pichai".) He who talks ill of His humble servant, is destroyed by him.

14. *Asa Mohalla 4, chhant ghar 4, Adi Granth*, p. 451.

help of God. The Sikh devotees themselves were presented as *Mall* or *Pehlwanra* (wrestlers) in the wrestling bouts between good and evil.<sup>15</sup>

The ideas of Guru Nanak and his immediate successors held great attraction for the Hindu trading classes who found in them an adequate answer to the Brahminical exclusiveness and rigidity as well as a catholicity of outlook which could enable them to build up harmonious relations with the Muslim rulers in the interest of their economic benefit. These ideas also presented opportunities to the lower classes like *Jats* to improve their social status. The result was that the Sikh movement grew rapidly in both numbers and resources. The growing popularity of the movement alarmed both the Muslim and Hindu orthodoxies. The former being of the ruling community, its hostility mattered most.

As soon as signs of adverse reactions became discernible, the Gurus embarked upon preparations to meet the challenge as and when it would come. Even as early as Guru Arjan's time, the necessity of horsemanship and skill in the use of arms was realized and the first steps in that direction were taken. The tragedy of Guru Arjan's death at the hands of the Mughal Emperor and the Muslim orthodoxy and by methods of severe torture drove home the lesson of not merely urgency but immediacy in the adoption of measures for self-defence. Ruling out passive submission to the official highhandedness as contrary to the whole ethos of Guru Nanak's movement, Hargobind, son and successor of the martyr Guru, put on two swords explicitly symbolizing what had been there in the implicit form the very first, a balanced and harmonious combination of the spiritual with the temporal concepts, called *Rajyoga*. True to his conviction and promise held out on his accession, the new pontiff collected arms, equipment and horses, trained his people in the technique of fighting by organizing regular training exercises and roused them to a sense of fervent heroism by precept as well as example. He also fought a few successful local military actions in which he and his men displayed marvels of valour. All this led to the building up of a glorious and never-to-be-forgotten tradition of heroism. After a brief interval of about 40 years this tradition was further enriched by the Ninth Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur. The issue was now widened to extend from mere self-defence that it

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15. Guru Arjan, *Sri Rag, Adi Granth*, p. 74.

was under Hargobind to a close identification with all those people who were helplessly smarting under what was considered the oppressive and intolerant regime of Emperor Aurangzeb. A bid, more conscientious than powerful, was made to instil in the aggrieved the spirit of manliness to rise in revolt against their oppressors. No immediate success was possible and none was gained, but the heroic manner in which the Guru and his devotees, both before and after their arrest, faced up to the challenge and ultimately sacrificed their lives not merely was in the true spirit of the earlier Sikh ideology and tradition, but also blazed a new trail in so far as it was a commitment to an open struggle against the organized oppression of the State.

This, then, was the ideology which Guru Gobind Singh inherited from his ancestors. As seen before, the basis of this essentially humanistic ideology was spiritual and moral, and its social or socio-political doctrine both positive and revolutionary. Furthermore, this ideology was buttressed by a long-standing and carefully nurtured heroic tradition in which use of force for an approved noble cause was both justified and employed.

Guru Gobind Singh, like his predecessors, accepted the basic unity of Guruship and put the failure to grasp this fundamental truth to lack of understanding.<sup>16</sup> This by itself should be a sufficient ground for the assumption, rather inference, that he accepted his heritage in full and tried to raise his superstructure on foundations well and truly laid by the earlier Gurus. But this is not all. In his writings there is ample evidence pointing to close identity between his ideas and those of his predecessors despite the difference of emphasis arising solely from the peculiarity of his circumstances. Like them he held aloft<sup>17</sup> spirituality, truth, love, charitability, equality, justice, continuence, social service, courage, dedication, knowledge and force for self-defence and righteousness and derided superstition, ritualism, austerities and pretence. Any attempt, therefore, to disassociate Gobind Singh's superstructure from its roots would be, to say the least, unhistorical.

However, this heritage founded and developed over a continuous period of 200 years and of basic significance in the comprehension of Guru Gobind Singh's ideas received further enrichment from him in

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16. *Bachitar Natak*, chapter 5. For Nand Lal's support to this see *Kulliyat*, p. 160: *Hamu Guru Gobind Singh, Hamu Nanak ast.*

17. See *Akal Ustat*, *Sawayyas*, *Jap* and *Bachitar Natak*.

the form of amplification of some of its important aspects. He was confronted with a situation of formidable challenge and difficulty. The new turn that the tide had taken in the time of his father had brought the conflict between the Sikhs and the Mughals into the open and any retreat from that position of open commitment was impossible as being inconsistent with the inherent character of the Sikh movement, as also being unfair to the noble cause his father had espoused and died for. The hope, if any, of an honourable settlement with the Imperial Government was eliminated by the tragic executions at Delhi in which Guru Tegh Bahadur and some of his associates fell martyrs. After that it was clear that unless the Sikhs were prepared to go under, they had to wage a struggle against the aggressive fanaticism and oppressive administration of the Mughals under Aurangzeb. The first course of going under was ruled out, almost instinctively, by the kind of training the community had received in the past. Selecting the second course as the only one compatible with the honour and mission of Nanak and his followers, Guru Gobind Singh plunged himself into preparatory measures for the inevitable struggle of the future.

Once the choice of course was made, the Guru attended in all seriousness to the task of raising a trained and disciplined force as his instrument of the struggle in view. No less important, rather far more important, was the evolution of a suitable theory of struggle which would not merely explain its aims but also boost the morale of the participants. Such a theory was evolved by the Guru by amplification or expansion of certain ideas of his inherited ideology and by drawing upon the remote heritage of the land. As noted earlier, these ideas were as follows : (i) God as the Eternal Protector of the good as against their detractors and oppressors ; (ii) ethical value of the struggles waged by the heroes and heroines of Hindu mythology; (iii) uncompromising resistance to tyranny; (iv) justification of the use of force in fight against tyranny. All these ideas were now coordinated and developed into a definite theory which he designated as *Dharam-yudh* and of which he declared himself to be a divinely ordained agent.<sup>18</sup> In this task he was greatly assisted by his study of ancient Indian literature which he found replete with accounts of the exploits of Goddess Durga, Ram Chandra, Krishna and several other heroes in the cause of righteousness. All this and the age-old Hindu notion that the Supreme Being Himself descended, from time to time,

18. *Bachitar Natak*, Chapter 6.

upon the earth in the human form to extirpate incorrigible tyrants convinced him that his idea of *Dharam-yudh* was no innovation, rather it nicely fitted in with the character of the old civilisation of the country. Of course, his monotheistic convictions led him completely to disapprove of the popular tendency to build up these classical heroes and heroines into deities representing divine incarnations, but he was satisfied that purely in its ethical sense this hoary tradition could be of great value and relevance to his own difficult situation. It could furnish, for instance, an excellent source of inspiration for his people by holding up to them the soul-stirring examples of the ancients; it could also serve the useful purpose of impressing upon them that in a fight between good and evil the victory of good is inevitable for God is always on its side.

But for its assimilation into the Sikh mode of thought it was necessary to mould this tradition suitably. With this end in view, he, as hinted earlier, divested it of its religious superimposition and reduced it to a phenomenon of unadulterated moral significance. The achievement of this was secured through the assertion of the old Sikh doctrine that none except the One God is to be worshipped. In regard to the idea of inevitable victory of good, another aspect of the classical tradition, it was asserted that inevitability, though perfectly valid, was not, however, to be mistaken for ease or complacency. This note of caution was presumably sounded to guard against the impression created by the Hindu tradition in which victory always came to the champions of good without any suffering of loss or defeat. The Sikh tradition coming down to him, to which he fully subscribed, pointed to the difficulty of the road to success and admitted sacrifice and suffering as inevitable concomitants of any struggle of righteousness.<sup>19</sup> He greatly prized victory in such a struggle but death in it, as indeed all resultant suffering, was to him glorious and something to be dearly cherished. He writes :<sup>19</sup>

Grant me this boon, O God, from Thy Greatness,  
May I never refrain from righteous acts;  
May I fight without fear all foes in life's battle;  
With confident courage, claiming the victory;  
May my highest ambition be singing Thy praises;

19. 'Should you desire to be a player in the game of love, come prepared for self-sacrifice. Should you venture to tread this path, sacrifice your head without demur. Guru Nanak, *Salok Varan to Wadhik, Adi Granth*, p. 1412.

And may Thy Glory be grained in my mind;  
When this mortal frame reaches its limits;  
May I die fighting with limitless courage;

—*Epilogue to Chandi Charitar*.<sup>20</sup>

The Theory of *Dharamyudh* thus evolved was elaborated further by incorporating into it certain new and original elements such as the concept of God as the Mightiest warrior and the investiture of weapons with divinity. God was viewed as the expert and wearer of all weapons and His might was represented as unmatched by any one else. The idea was probably suggested by the divine attribute that God had the power to destroy any one, whereas none had it in his power to destroy Him. The purpose behind this seems to be to heighten the effect of God's intervention in support of good against evil and thereby to prove the impossibility of defeat of the warriors of good operating under His benevolent care and protection. The second element was motivated to raise the importance of weapons as they constituted the vehicle of success and power. Weapons were depicted as decorating the person of the Almighty Himself, thus partaking of the attribute of divinity. In consequence, they were entitled to all respect and veneration. The chief of them, the sword, was called *khal dal khandan* (scatterer of the armies of the wicked), *Sukh santa karnan* (protector of the saints), *durmat darnan* (scourge of the evil), *jag karan* (creator), *sarist ubharan* (saviour), and *pratparan* (sustainer).<sup>21</sup>

Naturally, the use of force was of pivotal importance in Guru Gobind Singh's theory of *Dharam-yudh*. But it should not be confused with militarism in which force is employed for the sake of force, aggression or self-aggrandisement, for it was made subject to some major qualifications :

- (i) it must be for a cause legitimate and noble;
- (ii) it must be a remedy of the last resort.

But while these conditions are important and must be observed, it is no argument against having at all times the necessary capability to use force when required.

The Guru's theory of *Dharam-yudh* may be summed up in his own words<sup>22</sup> :

20. *Selections from The Sacred Writings of the Sikhs* (UNESCO), p. 274.

21. *Bachitar Natak*, 1; *Sacred Writings of the Sikhs*, p. 270.

22. *Dasam Granth, Krishnavtar*. *Sacred Writings of the Sikhs*, pp. 274-75.

Glory to noble souls who on their earthly way  
Carry upon their lips the Name of the Lord,  
And ever contemplate deep within their hearts  
The good fight's spirit;  
Knowing that the body is a fleeting vesture,  
They make the Lord's Song, they make the Lord's Name  
A boat to carry them over life's rough ocean;  
They wear as a garment that is as a fortress serene detachment;  
Divine knowledge is the light of their minds;  
Their cleaner's broom in their wise hands  
Is the broom of wisdom.  
With it they sweep all cowardice and all falsehood.

In the foregoing paragraphs we have seen three things :

- (i) The religious, social and political ideology of the preceding Gurus which Gobind Singh inherited and with which he identified himself in full;
- (ii) Precipitation of a conflict with the Mughal Government;
- (iii) the theory of *Dharam-yudh* evolved by Guru Gobind Singh.

All these are vital factors in the understanding of ideological aspects of the foundation of the Khalsa commonwealth. A careful and critical examination of these may lead to the conclusion that the commonwealth of Gobind Singh was a socio-political order with its base resting on spiritual and moral values or a corporate body of people who, deriving from religion strength as well as inspiration, aimed at bringing about a social and political revolution of which the hallmarks were equality, justice, and liberalism.

Let us now see whether and how far this view is supported by contemporaneous writers other than the Guru. The most important of them is Senapat whose work entitled *Gursobha* is on all hands recognised as an authentic source on the life and work of Guru Gobind Singh. According to him the creation of the Khalsa was motivated as under<sup>23</sup>:

"For this was the Khalsa created :  
To fight the evil, to smite the wicked,  
And to get rid of the crisis."

This clearly points to the purpose of the *Dharam-yudh* to which a reference has been made earlier. Besides, some principles of social

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23. *Gursobha*, 14/130.

conduct are given by the writer as injunctions of the Guru, which, if not exhaustive, do have the merit of giving some useful information on the strict discipline the Khalsa was required to observe.<sup>24</sup> For instance, it was enjoined upon the members of the Khalsa to have absolutely no truck with the *Meenas*, *Dhirmalliyas*, *Ramraiya*s, and *Masands*. All of them were to be shunned not merely for their tainted role in the past but also as a safeguard against their baneful influence in the future. All intoxicants were to be avoided, most of all tobacco because it was regarded as the worst of all. Keeping of unshorn hair was another 'must', and hence entering into any relationship with the clean-shaven was forbidden. It was further stressed that livelihood must be earned by hard labour and honesty and out of it one tenth, called *daxwandh*, should be set apart for the Guru's *golak* or treasury. Piecing all these bits together, the picture that emerges from Senapat's account is broadly corroborative of the view that the Khalsa was primarily a militant organization having a socio-religious basis, but oriented towards a struggle against the Mughal Government.

Another contemporary writer Nand Lal Goya, who spent several years in Guru Gobind Singh's camp, has made the position still clearer. He pictures the Guru as being at once a saint and a king—*badshah-darvesh* or *ham darvesh wa ham sultan*.<sup>25</sup> In the first capacity he is depicted as a man of God, a master of the two worlds and a saviour, perfect in spiritual and moral attainments and ideal as a leader and guide of humanity, while in the second he is shown as an exemplary dispenser of justice and administrator<sup>26</sup> and a peerless warrior unmatched by Arjun, Bhim, Rustam, Sam, Asfandyar, Lakshman, Ram, Mahesh and Ganesh.<sup>27</sup>

*Chih Arjun chih Bhim o chih Rustam chih Sam  
Chih Asfand-yar o chih Lachhman chih Ram  
Hazaran Mahesh o hazaran Ganesh  
Ba-payish nihadah sar-ijz-i-khesh.*

(What to talk of Arjun, Bhim, Rustam, Sam, Asfandyar, Lachhman and Ram ! Thousands of Maheshas and Ganeshas lie prostrate at his feet.)

That the Guru's valour and perfection in the use of arms were intended and employed for promoting the cause of righteousness is

24. Senapat, *Gursobha*, chapter 5.

25. Bhai Nand Lal, *Kulliyat*, ed. Dr. Ganda Singh, pp. 124, 142.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 130.

27. *Ibid.*, pp. 168-169.



stressed over and again by the writer. For instance<sup>28</sup> :

*Rukh-i-adl o insaf afrokhtah*  
*Dil-i-jabar o bedad ra sokhta*  
*Bina-i-sitam ra bar-andakhta*  
*Sar-i-ma'dalat ra bar-afrokhta.*

(He brightened up the face of equity and justice and burnt down the heart of tyranny and iniquity. He uprooted the foundation of cruelty and lifted the head of justice.)

The writer has repeatedly referred to his being the smiter of tyrants and miscreants<sup>29</sup> (*Sarshikan-i-devsaran, gardanzan-i-sarkashan, gardanzan-i-har sarkash-o-zalim, sitamgaran ra par o bal shikasta*)

Nand Lal's account of a code of conduct enjoined upon the Khalsa shows that the Khalsa was cast in the Master's own image, a fact to which the Guru himself testified by addressing the Khalsa as his *alter ego* (*Khalsa mero rup hai khas*).<sup>30</sup> The same values or principles that were cherished by the Guru thus became obligatory for all his followers and in them were included high spiritual and moral values, sound and healthy social relations, conscientious earning of livelihood, charitableness and heroism. Khalsa was viewed as one free from malicious criticism and the five evils of sexuality, wrathfulness, capacity, attachment and egotism, steeped in God-consciousness and having courage in abundance. Furthermore, he was portrayed as one who would practise oppression against none, who would cherish the poor and crush the wicked, who, seated on horseback and playing his weapons with dexterity, would march upon the Malechh Turks and destroy the evil. Guru Gobind Singh explained his aims to Bhai Nand Lal in the following manner :

"Listen, O Nand Lal, to this truth :  
 Our own Raj I would manifest;  
 The four castes I would make into one;  
 God's Name would then on all lips be;  
 And my men would be riding horses and flying hawks :  
 A sight that would put the Turks to rout."<sup>31</sup>

28. *Ibid.*, pp. 164-165.

29. *Ibid.*, pp. 131, 141, 143.

30. *Sarb Loh; Gursobha*, p. 105.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 183. Some people question that the code of conduct standing in the name of Nand Lal was his work. Dr. Ganda Singh gives the evidence of the surviving members of the writer's family in proof of its being a genuine work of Nand Lal. My own opinion is that there is nothing in it (excepting the last two lines which may be an interpolation) which does not find support in other contemporary works.

A view similar to this but far more elaborate is expressed in the *Prem Sumarg*, a semi-contemporary source, produced about a decade after the death of Guru Gobind Singh. The usual principles which ought to govern the conduct of the members of the Khalsa, both religious and social, are explained here with fervour and lucidity. Along with them, great stress is laid on the obligation of keeping weapons and on their discreet use. The author writes<sup>32</sup>: "No Singh should separate his weapons from his person. He should remain docile as a cow. But when he finds himself confronted with a tyrant bent upon mischief and dead to all appeals, when religion and honour are at stake and when there is no other alternative left, then he must resort to weapons as a remedy of the last resort."

Of great significance in this connection is also the fact that one third of this book is devoted to the spelling out of an ideal polity for a future *Khalsa Raj*. This along with the establishment, howsoever shortlived, of a Khalsa government under Banda Singh within two years of Guru Gobind Singh's death may furnish a further insight into the ideological background and aspiration of the Khalsa.

The *Rahatnamas* standing in the names of Desa Singh, Daya Singh and Chaupa Singh may not have been the works of the people with whom they are associated, but they were certainly the attempts of some devoted Sikhs who had some intimate knowledge of the Sikh code of conduct as prescribed by Guru Gobind Singh. These *Rahatnamas*, no doubt, have some minor differences, but on the whole the picture presented by them is not very different from the one we have seen above.

An essential part of Guru Gobind Singh's *Rehat* injunctions for the Khalsa was the obligatory use of certain common articles of apparel, namely *kes* (unshorn hair), *kangha* (comb), *kachh* (shorts), and some weapons. The first three *kes*, *kangha* and *kachh* are found mentioned in the contemporary or near-contemporary records. Regarding the weapons, the *Prem Sumarg* makes a mention of five arms without telling their names. Reading history backward, we can say, with some justification, that *kirpan* and *kara* were included in this group of five arms. It seems that with the passage of time three of the five arms fell into disuse leaving only two behind: *kirpan* and *kara*. These two gradually became an essential part of the Sikh apparel. All the five are collectively called the *Five Ks*, *K* being the initial letter of each of the five names.

It is important to see whether these *Ks* had any ideological

32. *Prem Sumarg*, edited by Randhir Singh, p. 11

significance. That they could not be without a purpose may be readily conceded. They are believed by almost all scholars of Sikhism to have had a deeper significance, which was that they symbolised the ideology of Guru Gobind Singh. Each symbol, it is affirmed, stands for a certain idea or group of ideas : as for instance, *kes* for spirituality; *kangha* for physical cleanliness; *kachh* for sex morality and self-control, *kara* for moral professional integrity and *kirpan* for heroism and defence of righteousness. Altogether they are supposed to confer upon their wearers the manly and upright image of their Great Master.

Some scholars have contended that the symbolic value of the various *Ks* was a later development. Their view is that in the beginning these articles were introduced for military and political purposes. They were introduced because of their tremendous value in active military life and also for the reason that they were marks of political defence and self-respect.

The latter view seems sound and scientific, but its contention that the *Ks* had no spiritual significance at the time of their introduction is open to doubt and cannot be accepted as final without further investigation.

Each initiate into the fold of Guru Gobind Singh's Khalsa had to pass through the ceremony of steel-baptism which inculcated in him, besides the determination to carry out the prescribed injunctions, the spirit of heroism. This spirit was intensified in many ways : by the dramatic manner in which the Guru initiated the reform and by the compulsory use of the term 'Singh' meaning lion at the end of every Khalsa's name. Pledges administered publicly on the occasion of baptism required the initiate to combine in their conduct this ideal of heroism with the other teachings of the Gurus.

In the foregoing pages we have examined, at some length, the ideological aspects of the creation of the Khalsa. When at the time Guru Gobind Singh's death, the personal Guruship was abolished and the Khalsa was transformed into the Panth or the commonwealth, it was endowed with sovereignty and it operated under God's special protection, for the Panth, like the Khalsa was God's own.<sup>33</sup> Thus endowed and thus protected, the Khalsa Commonwealth set out to achieve the comprehensive religion-based socio-political ideology which its founder, Guru Gobind Singh, had placed before it.

33. *Bachitar Natak*, Chapter 6.

## Indianisation of Indian Civil Service— the Formation of the Statutory Civil Service, 1879

DR S. K. BAJAJ\*

Before the introduction of competition as the system of recruitment of officers in 1854, Indians were consistently and systematically kept out from the Covenanted Civil Services. During the middle of the nineteenth century demand for due share and equal opportunities<sup>1</sup> for Indians grew in dimension corresponding to the spread of education. Resistance of the authorities and opposition of the Europeans generally to the demand of Indians resulted in cataclysm, mutual distrust and antagonism.<sup>2</sup> After the revolt of 1857 the competition system did not appear to be compatible with the security of India as it favoured Bengalees who were more intelligent than rest of Indians. Therefore, the scheme of scholarship was abolished<sup>3</sup> and instead attempts were made to reintroduce in some form or the other the system of nomination.<sup>4</sup>

Sudden suspension of the scheme of scholarships led the people to believe that it was done to check the infiltration of Bengalee element and to encourage the association of persons of merit and ability which in other words meant 'loyalty and high social status'. The change was condemned as impolitic and unstatesmanlike.<sup>5</sup> The Indian press sharply reacted and charged the Government of partiality. It was generally believed that the change in the policy was due to official fear

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1. The Willoughby Commission of 1860 recommended to hold simultaneous examinations in London and India.
2. Most of the officials regarded covenanted services an essentially British service, the back-bone of administration. They did not welcome admission of Indians to this service. See R.J. Moore's *Liberalism and Indian Politics, 1872-1922*, p. 59.
3. (a) Hansard's Parliamentary Debate, Vol. 901, pp. 1853-57.  
(b) Parliamentary Papers, Vol. 35 of 1879, p. 309
4. Education Despatch to the Government of India No. 3, dated 8 April, 1869.
5. *Education Gazette* of 7 and 14 January, 1870. See Reports on the Native Newspapers. From now onward it will be referred to as RNN. Bengal, January, 1870.

of increasing success of Indians in the competition.<sup>6</sup>

In 1870, after the suspension of the scheme of scholarship, Parliament passed an act which made it obligatory for the Government of India to frame rules for the appointment of Indians to the covenanted posts.<sup>7</sup> All reservations and restrictions contained in the earlier acts were abrogated. The Indian press was very critical of it as it intended to promote persons of high status to Covenanted services by nomination. Public meetings were held in all the major cities of India. Resolutions against this act were passed and communicated to the Secretary of State for India. Phirozshah Mehta in one of his contemporary papers noted following principal objection<sup>8</sup> :—

- (a) "that it strikes a fatal blow at the principle of competition in the civil service;
- (b) "that it revives and encourages the promotion of political jobbery;
- (c) "that it destroys unity and *esprit de corps* of the services;
- (d) "that it is unjust and demoralizing to the natives themselves."

Though the Act was communicated to the Government of India in the year it was passed, it remained absolutely quiet about it for two years till it received two consecutive despatches from the Home Government.<sup>9</sup> Providing certain guidelines, the Home Government instructed the Indian Government to lay down necessary rule under the Act of 1870. The first despatch explained the qualities a civil servant should possess which of course included vigour courage and administrative ability. Intellectual acuteness which was tested by competition and in which the Bengalees excelled the non-Bengalees was deliberately not taken as an indication of ruling power. The second despatch laid down three following principles to govern recruit-

6. (a) *Indu Prakash*, 10 January, 1870, RNN. Bombay, Jan., 1870.

(b) *Som Prakash*, 22 January, 1870, RNN. Bengal, January, 1870.

7. 33 Vic. Cap. 3 Sect. 6.

8. C.Y. Chintamani, (ed) *Phirozshah Mehta : Speeches and Writings* (Allahabad, 1905) p. 56. A paper on "On Clause 6 of the East India Bill read on 27 April, 1870, by Phirozshah Mehta at the meeting of the Bombay Branch of the East India Association.

9. (a) From Home Government to Government of India, 8 April, 1872 Home (Public), December 1872, No. 26,

(b) From Home Government to Government of India, 22 October, 1872, *Ibid.*, No. 27.

ment of Indians :—

- (a) that the key posts should be held by the Europeans;
- (b) that the Indians should primarily be employed on the judicial posts and rarely to the executive posts;
- (c) that the lower rate of salary should be given to the Indians.

With regard to the problem as to why Indian Government did not take any action on the Parliamentary enactment in question, it is interesting to note that the Act of 1870 was communicated to the Government of India without a covering despatch, a departure from the usual practice.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, the Government of India did not know as to how it was to be put into operation. None the less, during these two years the Members of the Council of the Governor-General made a comprehensive study of the allied problems, namely, the scope and range of employment, the status of Indians vis-a-vis, Europeans and the rules governing the Civil Servants appointed under the Act of 1870.<sup>11</sup>

Before going into the discussion which followed in India after the receipt of instructions from Home Government in 1872, it may be noted that there was a grand passion of the top administrators to present schemes based on their personal preference while skilfully maintaining 'imperial security' as a convenient projection to support their view-point. Another important factor was the uncompromising attitude of the lower official class which believed that it was their 'moral right' to have quick and regular promotions to the top rungs of administrative ladder. The practical difficulty before the junior Covenanted Civil Servants was that the top being heavy there were bleak chances of promotions even under normal circumstances.<sup>12</sup>

To implement the Parliamentary enactment, tentative rules were drawn by the Central Government and were communicated to the local government and administrations for their suggestions.<sup>13</sup> Authorities in Bengal, N.W. Provinces and Oudh, Central Provinces and British Burma generally approved the rules.<sup>14</sup> The Commissioner of

10. Note by H.W. (undated) Home (Public), December 1873, No. 26-29, K.W.

11. Note by E.C. Bailey, 3 July, 1872, *Ibid.*, K.W.

12. Note by Sir John Strachey, 21 October, 1872. *Ibid.*

13. (a) From Government of India to the Local Governments and Administrations, 3 December, 1873. *Ibid.*, 28.

(b) Draft of Rules under 33 Vic ? Cap. 3: Section 6, *Ibid.*, No 29.

14. From the Governments of Bengal, N.W. Provinces, Chief Commissioner of  
[Contd on page 214.]

Mysore, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal and the Resident in Hyderabad while disapproving the rules presented their own schemes to the Government of India. In view of stagnation in promotion, the Chief Commissioner of Mysore suggested that the maximum limit for the admission of the Indians could be fixed at ten per cent. He also suggested that the Indians should be admitted to the lower ranks of civil service and should never be allowed to supersede those coming through competition.<sup>15</sup> Making a definite proposal Campbell, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, favoured raising civil service exclusively for Indians to and subordinate to the higher executive posts. Saunder, the British Resident in Hyderabad, proposed nomination of Indians of merit and belonging to good families to the civil service. Intention underlying Campbell's proposal was to satisfy the natural instinct of the young educated Indians whereas Saunder's proposal was to place the young educated influential people at par with other civil servants.<sup>16</sup> Campbell's scheme was purely of administrative character while Saunder's was that of political one. Both of the schemes differed, in the words of Lyall, "as an American post master differed from an Austrian Attache."<sup>17</sup> But Saunder was convinced that the appointment of Indians to non-covenanted posts would "lower the prestige and high character" which the members of civil service had hitherto acquired and maintained.<sup>18</sup>

*Contd. from page 213.]*

Oudh, Central Provinces and British Burma to the Government of India, dated 15th December, 1873, 18 December, 1873, 10 December, 1873, 16 December, 1873, 20 December, 1873, respectively; Home (Public), May, 1875 Nos. 257-62. The Government of Punjab demanded some more time to study the problem. *Ibid.*, No. 259.

15. (a) From Chief Commissioner of Mysore to Govt. of India, 20 December, 1873, *Ibid.*, No. 264.  
(b) Note by Napier of Magdalla 8 August, 1873. Home (Public), December, 1873, No. 26-29 K.W. He recommended the proportion of 15 per cent. of the total.
16. Note by T. J. C. Plowden, 29 August, 1873, Home (Public), October, 1873, No. 3616-7, K.W.
17. Note by A. C. Lyall, 9 September, 1873, *Ibid.* Also see Memorandum of A.C. Lyall dated 24 September, 1873. *Ibid.* In this Memorandum he emphasised that appointments of Indians should be made on the basis of their academic and legal qualifications as well as experience.
18. From Saunder, Resident, Hyderabad to Govt. of India, 24 December, 1873. Home (Public), March, 1875 No. 264.

In view of opinions expressed by many officers, the Government of India prepared a scheme—more or less similar to that of Campbell's. The proposed scheme communicated to the Home Government in 1874 envisaged appointment of Indians of '*proved merit and ability*'—implying persons having good education, experience, high character and some degree of distinct success—to the covenanted posts. A term of service in the higher ranks of subordinate services was taken as one of the main qualifications for precedence. Like Saunder and Campbell the Government of India deprecated fixation of a proportion by "any arithmetical rule" because the constitution and numerical strength of the civil service varied in accordance with annual requirements. Contrary to the instructions of the Home Government, the proposed scheme did not envisage appointments of Indians exclusively to judicial posts. The covering despatch to the draft rules explained: "it is not desirable to impose upon the selection of natives of India for the public service any preliminary restrictions in the sense either of limiting or of enlarging their admission to any particular class of appointment."

On the receipt of the draft rules, the Secretary of State for India disapproved the rules at the instance of the law officers of the Crown. In his opinion, the Government of India had taken a very parochial view of the scope and intentions of the section 6 of the Act of 1870. He observed that "the appointments of this nature, involving qualifications, which it is hard to define by rule, and which require for discernment the exercise of liberal discretion, are best confided to the judgement of the Executive Government."<sup>20</sup> The Home Government framed a fresh specimen copy of the rules for the guidance of the Government of India.<sup>21</sup> These rules elucidated three main points viz.,

- a) that the chiefs of the subordinate governments should be vested with powers for making short term appointments;
- b) that the rules must provide a definite system of testing merit and ability of the candidates;
- c) that young Indians of station and influence must be given favourable consideration for political reasons.

19. From Government of India to the Secretary of State, 23 January, 1874. Draft copy of the rules enclosed with *ibid.*, No. 269.

20. From the Secretary of State to Government of India, 20 August, 1874. *Ibid.*, No. 272.

21. Specimen rules sent by the Secretary of State for India to Government of India. *Ibid.*, No. 273.



The discussion which followed in India after the receipt of the specimen rules from England reflects divergence in the opinions expressed by the European officials on the fixation of a proportion of posts to be given to Indians and departments in which they were to be absorbed. Arbuthnot, Eden and Napier expressed their fears of appointing Indians to executive posts instead of judicial ones.<sup>22</sup> A memorial from Covenanted Civil Servants of the Bengal Province numbering 344 to the Government of India and the Home Government demanded special and privileged treatment on account of pledges by which they were induced to serve in India. They also pointed out for the consideration of the Government the effect of depreciation of silver value on their salaries.<sup>23</sup> Northbrook, the Governor-General thought that the appointment of Indians exclusively to the Judicial Department would lead to "chronic antagonism between the executive and judicial officers." He asserted that the Section 6 of the Act 1870 presumed liberal attitude in the matter of admitting Indians to the Covenanted civil services. Northbrook added that it would not be right for the Government of India to allow the law to remain a dead letter. The admission of natives should be gradual and tentative, but some advance should be made in that direction."<sup>24</sup>

In response to the circular<sup>25</sup> and the telegraphic message<sup>26</sup> from the Central Government, the Bombay Government vehemently criticised the quality of the scheme and reluctance of the Central Government to state its policy in clear terms. Pointing out the erroneous principle underlying the idea of giving reduced salaries to the Indians, the Bombay Government wrote<sup>27</sup> :

"If salaries paid to the judicial functionaries are too high or their number too great, they may be reduced on these grounds, but not as means of fitting them for the tenure of Natives. ... No permanent

22. Note by A.J. Arbuthnot, 3 July, 1875, Home (Public), July 1875, No. 67-8, K.W.

23. Memorial dated 12 March, 1876; Home (Public), March 1877, Nos. 277 and 278.

24. Note by Northbrook, 10 April, 1876, Home (Public), May, 1879, No. 287-328, K.W.

25. A Circular to the local governments administrations, 20 April, 1876, *ibid.*, No. 298.

26. Telegram from Government of India to Government of Bombay, 24 January, 1877, *ibid.*, No. 295.

27. From Government of Bombay to Government of India, 30 June, 1876, *ibid.*, No. 302

advantage can be derived from attempts to disguise the facts that the Government must employ so much European agency as they deem necessary in every branch ... and that such agency must be more expensive than Native agency."

Subdued by the prevailing despair among the civil servants, the Bengal Government also did not approve the adoption of a large scheme.<sup>28</sup>

In Madras the proposal received general opposition of the Officers. They held that influx of Indians would not only be detrimental to the welfare of the covenanted civil servants but also politically inexpedient.<sup>29</sup> Besides doubting the loyalty of Indians, they believed that the lack of confidence and competence in them would deteriorate administration.<sup>30</sup> So much so that both the Governor and the President of the Board of Revenue of Madras anticipated failure of the scheme on its implementation.

Despite general opposition from the bureaucracy in the Presidencies, still there were some who recommended the adoption of a substantial measure in this direction. Richard Temple, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, though urged for extreme caution in 1873, now, in 1876, was in favour of trying Indians on executive posts in easily manageable districts. In his opinion the Indians would successfully imbibe administrative qualities with time and training.<sup>32</sup> As it was a radical break from the line of general official thinking, Temple's views were taken with great surprise and dislike by his colleagues—so much so that one of them went to the extent of saying that it was the result of confused thinking.<sup>33</sup>

'Dead Slow' policy of the Government resulted in a potential out-

28. From Government of Bengal to Government of India June 1876, *ibid.*, No. 303.

29. (a) Minutes of G. Thornhill, Member of the Board of Revenue, Madras, 23 May, 1876.

(b) Minute of H.E. Sullivan, Acting Third Member of Board of Revenue, Madras, 23 May, 1876.

(c) Minute of D. Arbuthnot, Second Member of Board of Revenue, Madras, (undated), *ibid.*, No. 292.

30. Minutes of R.S. Ellis, November 1876, and Robinson, 7 October, 1876, *ibid.*, No. 293.

31. Minute of Duke of Buckingham and Chandos President, Board of Revenue, Madras, 6 December, 1876, *ibid.*, No. 292.

32. Minute of Richard Temple, 5 June, 1878, *ibid.*, No. 304.

33. Note by E.C. Bayley, 25 August, 1876, No. 287-328 K.W.

burst under the leadership of Surendranath Bannerjee in 1876-7. He undertook the work of mobilising public opinion in India. By making hurried tour of all the big cities of India, and holding public meetings and by developing a dialogue with the local bodies and the press, he created a big political movement of the educated classes in India.<sup>34</sup> Transformation in thinking of the people is clearly reflected in the statement which Phirozshah Mehta made in a meeting held under the auspices of the Bombay Association. While seconding the Resolution on the admission of Indians to the civil service, he said :—

“I feel persuaded that the time has now arrived when from all parts of India, we should send forth a united and energetic appeal before the people of England in Parliament assembled, protesting against the injustice and inexpediency of the policy which is being pursued with regard to the question of the admission of natives into the civil service of their country.”<sup>35</sup>

Robinson testified that displeasure of the people was tending to separate not only intelligentsia but also other classes from the sympathy with the European administration. Highly Europeanised and centralised administration was raising unintended antagonism.<sup>36</sup>

Renewal of the discussion on the problem brought new dimensions to the surface. Europeans declined to work as subordinates to Indians. Suffering from the Bengalee-phobia, they suggested to plug the opening to the Bengalees by forbidding Indians to appear in the competition.<sup>37</sup> With regard to nomination, the primary condition of ‘merit and ability’ was now added by another condition, i.e., “*assured loyalty and courage under circumstances of danger and temptation*.”<sup>38</sup> Muir and Hope like many others were particular to fix a definite proportion of appointments of Indians.<sup>39</sup> Without giving way to despair, Lytton expressed his intense anxiety to execute the Act of 1870 with care and caution

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34. See Banerji, S.N., *A Nation in Making*, Chapter V.

35. Speech of Phirozshah Mehta, 15 December, 1877. See Chintamani, op. cit., p. 130.

36. Minute by Sir W. Robinson, 7 October, 1876; Home (Public), May 1879. No. 293.

37. Notes by E.C. Bayley of 25 August, 1876, and 3 November, 1876. *Ibid.*, No. 287-328 K.W.

38. *Ibid.*

39. Notes of T.C. Hope of 30th September, 1876, and note by William Muir, 25 October, 1876. *Ibid.*

and also in accordance with the views expressed by the officers.<sup>40</sup>

In his addresses to the Delhi assemblage and the Calcutta University, Lord Lytton opened his mind. To the Delhi Assemblage, he said "it is they (the Europeans) who must continue to form the most important practical channel through which the arts and sciences and the culture of the west may freely flow towards the east for the common benefit of all its children."<sup>41</sup> While addressing the Calcutta University on 10th March, 1877, he said :—

- (a) that certain posts could only be entrusted to Europeans (this rendered necessary to reclassify the services accordingly);
- (b) that it required reduction in the usual indents on England;
- (c) that the time had come to give substantial share to Indians in the administration.<sup>42</sup>

Though time was ripe to settle the claims of Europeans and Indians,<sup>43</sup> Lytton was not prepared to take hasty steps.<sup>44</sup> It took him about five months to draft the proposed scheme. He was largely guided by the views of Ashley Eden, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal in 1877. A brief explanation of Eden's scheme—pertinent and practical one under those circumstances—is necessary here to show its identity of spirit and purpose with that of Lytton's scheme. Believing that the terms 'Covenanted' and 'Uncovenanted' were full of unpleasant and disturbing associations, he preferred to replace them with 'Imperial' and 'Local' services<sup>45</sup> encouraging admission of Indians in the latter. Adhering to the axiom established by the Duke of Argyll, he proposed that high offices of imperial importance should be reserved for the Europeans forming a *corps de lite*.<sup>46</sup> He also suggested to abolish the system of indent for civilians to promote Indians belonging to non-convenanted services to the covenanted one. Clarifying the Europeans' claims that they had lien over Indians in the civil services, he aptly remarked that civil services were

40. Note of Lord Lytton, 16 October, 1876. *Ibid.*

41. From Government of Bengal to Government of India, 8 March, 1877, Home (Public), March, 1877 No. 309, para 8.

42. Note for the Viceroy by D.T.B. 17 May, 1877, Home (Public), May, 1879. No. 237-328 K.W.

43. From Ashley Eden to Lytton, 24 May, 1877. *Ibid.* K.W.

44. Note by Lord Lytton, 16 October, 1876. *Ibid.* K.W.

45. From Ashley Eden, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal to the Government of India, 8 March, 1877, paras 9-13.

46. *Ibid.*, para 8

made for India and not India for civil service.<sup>47</sup> Colonel Fraser while supporting Eden emphasised that the appointment of Indians should be encouraged in the departments like the Public Works, Education, Medicine and Miscellaneous.<sup>48</sup> Whereas Lord Lytton in his scheme proposed that a close Civil service should be formed for the Indians; that the system of competition should be replaced by that of nomination, that Indians should be remunerated at less rates than the Convenated Civil Servants but in status and position they should be treated as equal.<sup>49</sup>

The minute of Lord Lytton was first circulated in the form of an official note among three members of his Council—E.C. Bayley, Sir John Strachy and A. Arbuthnot—from whose administrative experience he anticipated valuable suggestion. But they expressed their concurrence without making any definite suggestion. When submitted to the local governments and other top officials, it was given a cordial assent by them. Temple's observation in this connection is worth quoting. He said :—

"I think to form civil service on the model of the old convenanted civil service, would be one of the very best things you could possibly do for the natives of India. Politically it would be more expedient. Morally it would be most just as tending, perhaps more than any other circumstance would tend, to elevate and strengthen their national character. ... It would be regarded, by them (Indians) as one of the greatest boons they have ever yet received at the hands of the present government."<sup>50</sup>

Nevertheless there were officials who criticised the scheme of Lord Lytton. Failing to understand the scope and nature of the scheme, Lepel Griffin, a Victorian egoist who suffered from strong sense of pride and prejudice, metaphorically said :—

"The Government of India seems to me to be in the position of a guest leaving a great house with all the servants eagerly watching the movements of the hand towards his pocket, and his one thought as it is that of the Government, is how little can I give them and

47. *Ibid.*, para 21.

48. Memorandum on the larger employment of Natives in India in P. W. Deptt. Colonel A. Fraser, 28 April, 1877. Home (Public), May, 1879. No. 287-328 K.W.

49. Minute of Lord Lytton, 7 January, 1879. *Ibid.*, No. 319.

50. From Richard Temple to Lord Lytton, 29 June, 1877. *Ibid.* K.W.

without appearing mean.”<sup>51</sup>

Eden and Jackson were critical of the formation of the close ‘Native Civil Service’ by converting Subordinate Civil Service as that service was meant primarily for the middle classes. Eden apprehended that the creation of close service for Indians would ultimately result in the formation of heterogeneous and unmanageable body and “one in which it might be found undesirable to vest very definite interest or to encourage too great *“esprit de corps.”*<sup>52</sup> Criticising the selection of civil servants on the basis of family or class, Jackson asked to lay down general and necessary qualification required for such posts.<sup>53</sup> Arbuthnot’s note on historico-legal aspects of this problem struck at the very root of the scheme. Technical shortcoming of the scheme was that reservation of certain posts exclusively for Indians was contrary to the provisions of the Act of 1833 while exclusion of Indians from the covenanted services was violation of the Act of 1870.<sup>54</sup> Thus, the adoption of the scheme required a modified Parliamentary enactment.

On the receipt of the views of the local governments and officials, a committee was instituted to report on the issues upon which difference of opinion prevailed.<sup>55</sup> Colvin who was in the chair prepared the scheme for Lord Lytton on the basis of the report of the Committee.<sup>56</sup> The Government of India purposely presented a bare scheme to the Home Government.<sup>57</sup> But the appointment of Kunwar Rameshwar Singh, the younger brother of Maharaja of

51. Note by Lepel Griffin, August, 1877 (date not mentioned), *ibid.* K.W. In this note, he observed, “we hold India, a few thousands in the midst of millions, by our ruling qualities and not by those which are common to all enslaved races the genius of serving well. We hold India for no sentimental reasons of its good, but own advantage or for the glory of our country.”

52. Confidential Minute of Ashley Eden, 23 June, 1877. *Ibid.*

53. From Louis Jackson to Government of India, 15 Oct., 1877. *Ibid.*

54. Note by A.J. Arbuthnot, 30 January, 1878. *Ibid.*

55. *Ibid.* No. 324. Committee was constituted by C.B. Colvin (in the Chair), C. Bernard, J. Westland and D. Barboh.

56. Notes by B.C. Colvin and S.C. Bayley (undated) and letter from Richard Temple to Eden, 3 December, 1877. *Ibid.*, K.W.

57. From Government of India to the Secretary of State for India, 2 May, 1878, Home (Public), May 1878 ; No. 321, para 30. Following is the summary of proposal prepared by the Government of India :

(a) the establishment of the close Native Civil Service to which should be transferred a proportion of posts now reserved to the covenanted civil service; the annual number of competitive appointments being henceforward reduced in

[Contd. on page 222.]

Durbanga, crystalised the point of view with which the scheme was drafted.

John Strachey observed :—

"We attach great importance to the obvious political expediency of endeavouring to strengthen our administration by attracting to it that class of Natives whose social position or communication give to them a commanding influence over their own countrymen. The qualifications of such persons for administrative employment were partly inherited, partly developed by early habits of command, partly proved by the readiness with which their right to command is recognised by large number of their Native fellow-subjects."

To ensure requisite standard of efficiency and energy in a service organised as to combine social influence with educational proficiency, it was considered essential to make service a close one.<sup>58</sup> And to fulfil the legitimate aspiration commensurate with their official status and also to make promotions of officers regular, the scheme proposed to make a provision for a complete course of progressive official experience. To the services thus constituted, it was suggested to assign tentatively a proportion of fifteen per cent. of the appointments then held by the covenanted services and to transfer non-covenanted

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*Contd. from page 221.]*

similar proportion;

(b) the transfer to this service of the proportion of posts now held by the uncovenanted officers;

(c) the appointments to this service be made by selection, and not competitive examination; tests of qualification on being supplied by special examination, and departmental tests such as those in force, being maintained; the Government to be at liberty to transfer to the new service, at first starting and probably for some years to come, a certain number of uncovenanted officers, but afterwards the service to be strictly a graded service, with a fixed number of appointments allotted to it, to which the members of service should have an exclusive claim ;

(d) that equivalent posts, when held by members of the Native Service, should, as a rule, be less paid than when held by covenanted civil servants, but should be equal in status and position ;

(e) that nominations should be made by local governments, but that the actual appointments should be conferred by the Viceroy in Council.

58. Note signed by John Strachey, E.B.J. and W. Stocks, 2 February, 1878, Home (Public), February 1878, No. 193-195 K.W. para 22.

59. *Ibid.*

superior judicial posts to close service<sup>60</sup>. The Government of India was not willing to maintain any distinction "in the duties, responsibilities, status and position" between the corresponding posts in the Native civil service and convenanted civil service<sup>61</sup>. Issues relating to the number, nature, salary, period of probation, etc., were left to be settled with the consultation of the local governments in order to weld this scheme into a homogeneous one. Scheme though novel was essentially a compromise.

The Government of India then appealed to the Home Government to introduce the requisite legislation in Parliament. But Lord Cranbrook, the successor of Lord Salisbury, saw no prospects of such a legislation getting through Parliament because it was tantamount to abrogation of the Act of 1833. Contrary to the proposed scheme, Cranbrook was in favour of opening all convenanted posts to youngmen of the class which Government of India intended to bring forward. As regards Europeans, objection that they could not work as subordinates of Indians, Lord Cranbrook said that every appointment "must be determined in reference to what public interest required" and nothing else.<sup>62</sup>

To Lord Lytton's utter dismay, he received fresh instructions from the Home Government to frame new rules. Though he had to acquiesce in the new instructions, he firmly believed that any system except his own would not animate *esprit de corps*. He apprehended that any other scheme by its very nature would give a feeling to Indians that they were only a "tolerated excrescence".<sup>63</sup> In defence of his scheme, he wrote that "pettiness of the prizes open to them and extreme uncertainty of their prospects in our service" had no attraction for those whom we most desire to associate with it. Thus we remain in the vicious circle round which we have been wandering just half as long as the Hebrews wandered in the wilderness."<sup>64</sup>

60. *Ibid.*, para 27

61. *Ibid.*, para 24

62. From Secretary of State for India to Government of India, 7 November, 1878; Home (Public), May 1879. No. 322.

63. Note by Lord Lytton, 23 February, 1879. *Ibid.*, No. 287-328 K.W.

64. Balfour, Betty, *The History of Lord Lytton's Indian Administration, 1876-1880* (Compiled from his letters and official papers) (London, 1899), pp. 531-2. With regard to the failure of the Government to execute the Act of 1870, Lytton attributed it to "the vagueness of promises."



In accordance with Cranbrook's instructions, new rules were framed<sup>65</sup> which after receiving the approval of the Secretary of State for India brought into being the Statutory Civil Service.<sup>66</sup> Under this service, age-limit was waived; one-sixths of the total appointments were fixed for this service; each appointment was initiated by the local governments approved by the Governor-General in Council.<sup>67</sup> All appointments were offered a proper order in the list of covenanted civil service and in a separate list as well.<sup>68</sup> Rejecting the views of Richard Strachey to offer equal salaries to the personnels of both the services,<sup>69</sup> the Home Government decided to remunerate Indians at the rate not exceeding two-thirds of the salaries offered to the European Civilians.<sup>70</sup> Their pensions were also fixed on the pattern of the Covenanted Civil Service Rules.<sup>71</sup>

In pursuance of the new scheme, all the local Governments were asked to recommend names of candidates of merit and ability belonging to high and respectable families.<sup>72</sup> The names which were recommended by the Madras Government to the Government of India made it clear that the local governments did not comprehend the principles of nomination.<sup>73</sup> To this purpose, the Government of India passed a Resolution wherein it clearly explained the requisite qualifications for nominating Indians.<sup>74</sup> The Government of Madras could find such people who fulfilled the qualifications laid down in the Resolution.<sup>75</sup> But the Government of Bombay was unable to find qualified

65. Circular 18 April, 1879, and despatch to the Secretary of State for India, 24 April, 1879; Home (Public), April 1879, No. 176.

66. From Secretary of State for India to Government of India 17 July, 1879; Home (Public), September, 1879, No. 131.

67. Notification 22 August, 1879. *Ibid.* 132.

68. Extract of the Proceedings of Government of India (Home, Revenue, Agriculture Deptt. Resolution of 25 August, 1880), Home (Public), August 1880, No. 128.

69. *Ibid.*, para. 8.

70. Notification of 22 August, 1879, op. cit.

71. From Secretary of State to Government of India, 11 March, 1880, Public Despatch No. 22.

72. Circular to local governments, 4 September, 1879, Home (Public), September, 1879, No 133.

73. See correspondence with the Madras Government, Nos. 361 and 392, Home (Public), December 1879.

74. Resolution, 24 December, 1879, *Ibid.*, No. 371.

75. From Government of Madras to Government of India, 28 February, 1880, and from Government of India to Government of Madras, 19 March, 1880, Home (Public), March 1880, No. 103 and 104 respectively.

Indians belonging to the families of the chiefs and nobles.<sup>76</sup> In the absence of such a combination, relaxation of rules was necessary. And Lord Lytton accordingly instructed that :

“...the choice must apparently, so far as Bombay is concerned, be limited to the sons of Native gentlemen of character and respectability and especially of those whose loyalty and good feeling have been approved by their own exemplary service to the state.”<sup>77</sup>

The whole scheme was based on wrong assumption because the type of persons government intended to associate were not available. If there were a few, they did not show any keenness to assume such offices. In fact, the scheme was evolved after great debate as an alternative to the demand of Indians. Although it appeased majority of Europeans, it was a dodge to the aspirations of those who deserved an opportunity to compete. In view of the reduction in the age limit from 21 to 19 years to compete in examination which almost plugged the Indian entry into services,<sup>78</sup> which slammed the door of I.C.S. “in their faces,”<sup>79</sup> the scheme certainly was consistent with the policy of the British. Equality of position with remunerative inequality imparted the scheme the bias that it was a ‘tolerated excrescence.’

Disappointed by the new arrangements, the Bengalees subjected the Government to all kinds of charges. The men appointed under the new rules, *the Sahachar* apprehended, would “be obliged to become veritable slaves of the Government.”<sup>80</sup> Another Indian newspaper observed that “the scheme is likely to be productive of favouritism and jobbery.”<sup>81</sup> Expressing its great surprise at the new rules, an important newspaper demurred : “whatever they (Indians) would get is only through favours of the Government.”<sup>82</sup> The educated middle classes especially felt aggrieved and rightly suspected that the nomi-

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76. From Government of Bombay to Government of India, 15 September, 1880, Home (Public), November 1880, No. 49.

77. From Government of India to Government of Bombay, 9 November, 1880. *Ibid.*, No. 51.

78. See Ripon's Minute of 10 September, 1884, in C.H. Phillips' *Evolution of India and Pakistan, 1858-1947*. Selected Documents (London 1962), pp. 52-4. Till 1886 only one Indian could successfully compete in civil service examination.

79. Moore, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

80. *The Sahachar*, 25 August, 1879; RNN Bengal of 30th August, 1879.

81. *The Bharat Sangskarak*, 19 March, 1877, RNN Bengal of 24 March, 1877.

82. *The Navavibhakar*, 18 August, 1879, RNN Bengal of 23 August, 1879.

nation system was adopted to exclude them from services.<sup>83</sup> With the greater influx of Europeans into India and increasing number of educated yougmén, it had otherwise become difficult for them to obtain entry into the civil services.<sup>84</sup> For the purpose of making representation to Parliament in this subject, the Indian Association sent Mr. Lalmohan Ghosh to England. Later the scheme was abolished and replaced with the provincial Civil Service within a decade.

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83. *The Pratihar*, 16 January, 1880, RNN Bengal of 31 January, 1880.

84. *The Som Prakash*, 11 September, 1876, RNN Bengal of 26th September, 1876.

85. *The Sahachar*, 3 March, 1879, RNN Bengal of 8 March, 1879.

## Phulkian Chiefs' Paper of Requests (1858) in the Context of their Previous Relations with the British Government

A. C. ARORA\*

The British Government of India did not follow any definite and consistent policy in their relations with the Indian States. It was declared in Pitt's India Act (1784) in very clear and unambiguous terms, "To pursue schemes of conquest and extension of dominion in India are measures repugnant to the wish, the honour and the policy of this nation." But in practice this clause was honoured more in its breach than in its observance. Lee Warner observes that East India Company's policy towards the Indian States had two distinct phases. During the first period extending from 1757 to 1813 it adopted the policy of non-intervention or the policy of 'the ring fence' as he calls it.<sup>1</sup> In the latter period from 1813 to 1857 it followed the policy of 'subordinate isolation.'<sup>2</sup> But such an over-simplification of the British Policy extending over a hundred years of the Company's rule, appears to be both unhistorical and inaccurate. In point of fact, the policy varied from Governor-General to Governor-General and from State to State, for as S. N. Prasad remarks, "British relations with the Indian states were not conducted by doctrinaire theorists, but by practical politicians."<sup>3</sup> Every Governor-General had his own outlook and, in the light of the given situation, he would determine his policy on the basis of his diplomatic calculations and merits of each case. A series of treaties were concluded with and *sanads* issued, to the native princes from time to time. But the relations were not based strictly and scrupulously upon these treaties and *sanads*. In many cases, customs and usages formed a significant additional source of relationship. Above all, it were the requirements of the Paramount Power veiled under its benevolent pretensions which, more than any other factor, were at the back of such relationship. Tupper has coined

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1. William Lee Warner, the *Protected Princes of India* (London, 1894), pp. 56-89.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 90-121.

3. Sri Nandan Prasad, *Paramountcy under Dalhousie* (Delhi, 1964), p. 15.

the phrase 'Indian Political Law' for the rules and principles which determined British relationship with the feudatory States.<sup>4</sup> But this expression used by him is more novel than correct. In point of fact, there were neither definite rules nor principles, much less any law that governed British relationship with the Native States. In plain language, it was expediency or enlightened self-interest which weighed with the British diplomats more than anything else. Nor did the British Government use the same stick to beat all the States with. As the States differed vitally from one another in their size, situation and importance, it was not thought desirable to follow a uniform policy towards them. In some cases, the British Government was contented just by extending protection and acquiring the control of the foreign and military affairs of the States, interfering only when called upon to do so; in other cases it meddled too much with their internal affairs, even to the extent of taking over their administration in its own hands, still in other cases, casting aside sacred solemn treaties it had entered into earlier, it resorted to annexation of the States on one plea or the other, and did not hesitate even to apply force and fraud for accomplishing its object. It may also be noted in this connection that very often the British Government would start with an innocent-looking treaty or *sanad* using high-sounding words to win over the confidence of that particular Chiefship and then by subsequent treaties and *sanads* and even without them—it imposed more and more restrictions upon that State as demanded by the circumstances and exigencies of the situation. The British relations with the Phulkian Chiefs of Patiala, Nabha and Jind present an interesting case-study. According to Griffin, the policy of the British Government in regard to the Sikh States has been uniformly liberal, enlightened and just."<sup>5</sup> There is no doubt that the general attitude of the British Government towards these States was marked comparatively by somewhat liberal considerations, but Griffin's assumption that the policy which the Government adopted towards them was the same policy which it maintained towards the rest of India,<sup>6</sup> is too simple a generalisation of a very complex problem. To say that it is not only to betray lack of understanding of the British diplomacy but also to minimise and misunder-

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4. Sir Lewis Tupper, *Our Indian Protectorate* (London, 1893), p. 6.

5. Lepel Griffin, *the Rajas of the Punjab* (London, 1873), Preface, p. VIII.

6. *Ibid.*

stand the historical significance of the British relationship with the Phulkian States.

It was on 3rd May, 1809, that the Phulkian Chiefs of Patiala, Nabha and Jind along with other Cis-Sutlej Chiefs had, on their own 'application and earnest entreaty', come under the protection of the British Government to secure themselves from the 'authority and control of Maharaja Ranjit Singh'. Keeping in view what Ranjit Singh was and what he had been in his dealings with the other Sikh Misldars, it may safely be observed that these Chiefs had shown a great practical wisdom by seeking the protection of the British. It could not be that they were entirely unaware of the imperialistic designs of the British, but they were more certainly aware of the ambitious designs of the man of their own community, and their apprehensions on that account were by no means exaggerated. Under the circumstances they had expediently chosen a lesser evil by coming under the British protection. At that time Lord Minto was the Governor-General whose period of office (1807-13), together with that of his two immediate predecessors, George Barlow and Cornwallis, has been captioned by Sir Alfred Lyall as 'the stationary period' in the history of the rise and expansion of British dominion in India. Falling between Wellesley and Marquess of Hastings, the two Governors-General who by their 'clearheaded' though 'high-handed' policy played a remarkably significant role in the assertion and extension of British supremacy in India, this period was marked by the adoption of a less vigorous and necessarily more considerate policy towards the Native States. Hence the Cis-Sutlej Chiefs could get quite favourable terms from their Paramount. Apart from protection extended to them against Ranjit Singh's intrusion, the British conceded to them free exercise of the same rights and authority within their own possessions which they enjoyed hitherto. In return for all this they were bound to furnish the British force with supplies of grain and other necessities whenever it happened to march through their country for the purpose of general welfare, to allow the European articles intended for the use of army to pass through their territories without molestation or demand of any duty, and to join the British army with their forces in case of attack from an enemy for the purpose of conquering their country. It was specifically laid down that they shall be exempted from the payment

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7. Sir Alfred Lyall, *The Rise and Expansion of the British Dominion in India* (London, 1920), p. 270.

of any pecuniary tributes.<sup>8</sup> It is also significant to note that no subsidiary force was to be maintained at the expense of the Chiefs, nor were the latter's contingents of forces definitely fixed, with which they were to join the British army. It were these remarkable concessions, noticeable in the very foundation-document of the British relations with the Phulkian Chiefs which not only kept these Chiefs hereafter often loyal to the British but mitigated the possibilities of the absorption of parts of their territories, giving allowance, of course, to the overbearing and unscrupulous attitude of any Governor-General of the Company which might prevail at any time to annex any State on one pretext or the other. And these concessions also provide explanations of the fact that whereas in regard to many other States the general trend had been towards the decrease of their territories by every subsequent treaty or *sanad*, in case of the Phulkian States under discussion the general trend had been towards the increase of their territories, depending invariably, of course, upon the loyalty and services of the individual Chief to the British Government. A perusal of the *Sanads* issued individually to the Chiefs of Patiala, Nabha and Jind between 1809 and 1862 demonstrates this statement.<sup>9</sup>

True to its commitments, the British Government allowed all the Cis-Sutlej Chiefs, big and small, to exercise more or less freely in practice their rights and authority within their own possessions from 1809 to 1845. It did not interfere in their internal administration except when it was requested to do so or when its intervention was thought to be inevitable to solve a specific issue. For example, during 1811-13 Col. Ochertony visited Patiala twice to suggest improvements in the deteriorating state of administration on requests by Raja Sahib Singh of Patiala and Rajas of Nabha and Jind on the first occasion and by Rani Aus Kaur, who was virtually controlling the administration on the other.<sup>10</sup> In 1828 the British Government intervened to settle the long-standing dispute between the Chiefs of Patiala and Nabha over the village Doladdi. It is important to note that Raja Sangat Singh (1822-34) of Jind was a great favourite of Ranjit Singh and whereas all

8. C. U. Aitchison, *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, Vol. I (Calcutta, 1931), p. 156.

Also see 'Paper given to the Raja of Nabha under the seal and signature of the Governor-General', 1810, pp. 294-5.

9. *Ibid*, pp. 158-165, 200-262, 295-99.

10. Griffin, *op. cit.*, pp. 126-27, 142-43.

the three Phulkian Chiefs had had diplomatic relations with the Lahore Government through their agents and vakils, Sangat Singh on one occasion (1827) had seized the village Antiana (situated on the southern side of river Sutlej) and got its recognition in lieu of a *nazrana* from Ranjit Singh, for which he was reprimanded by the British Government.<sup>11</sup> The village was restored to its owner, Ram Singh. In cases of conflicting situation about succession also the British Government interfered to settle the matter. For instance, when Raja Sangat Singh of Jind died in 1834 without a son to succeed him, many candidates advanced their claims—Sarup Singh, Sukha Singh, Jaswant Singh of Nabha, and many widows of the royal family of Jind. The British Government intervened and supported the claim of Sarup Singh who was consequently installed on the Chiefship.<sup>12</sup> These stray cases, to which a few more may be added, tend to suggest that the British intervention in the internal matters of the Phulkian Chiefs was occasional and accidental rather than systematic. The British Government did not interfere in the day-to-day administration of these Chiefs who continued to wield absolute civil, criminal and fiscal jurisdiction in their respective territories.

After 1845, however, the British policy towards most of the petty Cis-Sutlej Chiefs underwent a great change, though comparatively less change was witnessed in their attitude towards the three Phulkian States. The reason was that in the course of the First Anglo-Sikh War (1845-46) the petty Cis-Sutlej Chiefs and even the Rajas of Kapurthala and Nabha had sympathy with their Sikh bretherns and not few of them openly supported them against their own Protectors. In response to the proclamation issued by the British Government to the protected Chiefs and Sirdars for their cordial cooperation,<sup>13</sup> the Chiefs of Patiala and Jind instantly sent their troops and also provided all possible supplies and carriages, but the Raja of Nabha deliberately delayed and thereby disobeyed the Suzerain Power. After the crisis was over, the British Government followed the policy of punishing disobedience and rewarding obedience. Most of the petty Cis-Sutlej Chiefs were deprived of their police jurisdiction. It was decided that they would no longer raise the contingents but pay a fixed sum to

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 324-26.

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 329-37.

13. Aitchison, *op. cit.*, Proclamation of the Governor-General of India, 1845, pp. 48-50.



the Government annually. Some of them were even deprived of the parts or all of their territories. Raja Devinder Singh of Nabha was deposed and exiled, and his minor son Bharpur Singh was installed on the *gaddi*. Nabha also lost one-fourth of its territories. On the other hand, the Maharaja of Patiala and the Raja of Jind, as also the Raja of Faridkot, were rewarded for their 'attachment and services' to the British Government during the late war. Certain lands were bestowed upon each one of them. Such was the anxiety and disappointment of the Governor-General caused by the general attitude of the Cis-Sutlej Chiefs and people that it was now decided to take greater interest in the internal administration even of the Phulkian Chiefs. The Government imposed some restrictions upon their 'rights and authority'. These changes in the British policy found expression in the new *Sanads* which were issued to the Phulkian Chiefs on 22nd September, 1847. Apart from reiterating the usual assurances that the hereditary estates of the Chiefs shall continue for ever to be in possession of themselves and their successors, that the British Government will not demand from them and their successors any tribute or revenue or commutation in lieu of troops and that the British authorities will not entertain complaints of their subjects and dependants, these *Sanads* laid down that the Chiefs will do justice to their subjects and promote their welfare and happiness, that they have relinquished from themselves and for their successors for ever the right to levy excise and transit duties, that they will suppress *sati*, infanticide and slave-dealing within their territories, that they will join the British army with their forces in case of attack from an enemy and that they will keep in repairs the military roads through their territories for the passage of the British troops.<sup>14</sup> It was also at this time that the three Phulkian Chiefs were bound to get the approval and consent of the British Agent for giving capital sentences. These restrictions were by no means considerable and some of them were nothing more than mere good suggestions which again might or might not be accepted by the Chiefs in practice. The Chiefs certainly were very conscious of these encroachments on their sovereign rights and authority and would only be too glad to have them withdrawn; yet they did not appear to have been dissatisfied. They valued quite as much, rather more, the assurances which had been repeated in these *Sanads* together with the additional territories conferred upon them. Nor

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14. *Ibid.*, pp. 160, 260.

did they fail to appreciate the preferential treatment given to them as compared to the other Cis-Sutlej Chiefs. During the Second Anglo-Sikh War (1848-49), the Phulkian Chiefs voluntarily and willingly offered their services. But these were declined with thanks by the British authorities. During the period of the Governor-Generalship of Lord Dalhousie, all the Cis-Sutlej States, with the exception of these three Phulkian States and six others, lost all civil, criminal and fiscal jurisdiction and were reduced to the position of ordinary subjects of British Government in possession of certain exceptional privileges.<sup>15</sup> But even this arch-imperialist did not interfere at all in the matters of these loyal Chiefs and allowed them to exercise their rights as usual.

The upshot of the above discussion is that the attitude of the British Government towards the Phulkian Chiefs from 1809 to 1857 had been on the whole very reasonable. But to attribute this comparatively liberal attitude to the innate generosity or goodness of the British diplomats will be simply puerile. It were actually the diplomatic calculations of a wider policy which weighed with them. The Governors-General of the East India Company during this period had been absorbed first in dealing with the Gorkhas, Marathas and Pindaris and then with the frontier States of Sindh and the Punjab. Under these circumstances, it was thought essential to retain the friendship and fidelity of these Chiefs. Dalhousie, as has been pointed out already, had reduced most of the Cis-Sutlej chiefships to the level of Jagirdars but even he had thought it advisable not to alienate these big Cis-Sutlej Chiefs. Since the Kythal case, the Phulkian Chiefs had, of course, been having fears lest the major parts of their States should be annexed by the British, and their fears had increased due to Dalhousie's application of the Doctrine of Lapse. Nevertheless, they had all along been generally very loyal and devoted to the British Government. And they had their own considerations. They believed that it was only by supporting their Patrons, and not by opposing them, that they could secure their rights and territories. Their loyalty could pay them dividends, as indeed it had always done, and their disloyalty would not only mean for them the personal loss of their *gaddis* but would also involve the loss of their territories and perhaps total absorption of their States.

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15. Griffin, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

It was in the context of such relations of the British Government with the Phulkian States that a serious revolt broke out in 1857, the most formidable rising in the history of the British rule in India, which was destined to bring with it the death-warrant of the East India Company. Some writers have characterised this momentous event as a mere 'Mutiny' or military rising, whereas others have taken fancy to describe it enthusiastically as a 'National Rising, or 'War of Indian Independence.' It is not within the purview of this paper to examine the nature of this stupendous rising. Suffice it to say that it was certainly much more than a mere mutiny but perhaps it could not assume the character of a truly national rising. National consciousness, it appears, was not so much a cause as a consequence of this Great Revolt.<sup>16</sup> Be that as it may, the Indian Princes had much to do with the revolt. It cannot be denied that Dalhousie's policy towards Indian States, especially his wide application of Doctrine of Lapse together with the annexation of Oudh, had caused a thrill of uneasiness among many Princes and those who actually became the victims of this policy joined the revolt in a spirit of vengeance. On the other hand, many rulers of the Indian States, including the Phulkian Chiefs of Patiala, Nabha and Jind, actively supported the Paramount Power. It was frankly self-interest that was in operation on either side. For the Chiefs of Patiala, Nabha and Jind it was most natural to help their Paramount, and its explanation, as mentioned already, is to be sought in their previous relationship with the British. Here was a golden opportunity for them to render services to the British authorities to win over their gratitude and then to procure the much-desired concessions from them. It was, therefore, not surprising that Maharaja Narinder Singh of Patiala, Raja Sarup Singh of Jind and Raja Bharpur Singh of Nabha vied with one another in helping the British. Immediately on hearing the news of the disturbances at Meerut and Delhi, the Maharaja of Patiala 'placed himself boldly and heartily' on the side of the British. He marched with his force to Ambala and from there proceeded to Thanesar. Having left a force under

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16. "The outbreak of 1857 would go down in history as the first great and direct challenge to the British rule in India on an extensive scale. As such it inspired a genuine national movement for freedom of India from the British yoke which started half a century later."—R.C. Majumdar, *the Sepoy Mutiny and the the Revolt of 1857* (Calcutta, 1963), p. 278.

Deep Singh for the protection of Thanesar he returned to Ambala and under the instructions from the Commissioner and Commander-in-Chief, he undertook the arduous responsibility of protecting the territory between the Jamuna and the Sutlej. He placed a force under Heera Singh for the protection of Ambala. He also sent his troops to Delhi (under Partab Singh and Syed Mohammad Hussain), Hissar (under Karam Singh, Hansi (under Dul Singh and Fateh Singh), Ferozepore (under Jeewan Singh), Jagadhri (under Ram Dyal and Elahee Buksh), Rohtak (under Malik Nizam-ud-din), Sirsa (under Jasee Khan) and Saharanpore (under Hazara Singh), and helped in quelling the disturbances at all these places. The whole of the Maharaja's troops employed in aid of the British Government consisted of 2156 Horse, 2846 Foot, 156 Officers; 970 Camp-followers and 8 Guns. The Maharaja also furnished supplies and carriages, and advanced a loan of five lakh of rupees to the British Government.<sup>17</sup> The Raja of Jind did not lag behind. He "atonce threw himself without reserve" on the side of the British. Accompanied by his Commandant Kahan Singh, he marched with all his troops 'under a burning sun' towards Thanesar and from there to Karnal. He made arrangements for the protection of Karnal. At the request of Captain Andrew he sent some of his men to secure the bridge of Baghput on the Jumna and ordered his cousin, Punjab Singh, to escort Captain Hodson to Meerut. He occupied and protected the towns of Panipat and Raei, and kept the road safe from Karnal to the Camp before Delhi. He was the only Chief who was personally present with the British army before Delhi and thereby gave the strongest proof of his loyalty and courage. "He never showed the slightest hesitation but evinced from the outset a resolution to stand or fall with us." He also sent his forces to Jhujjar, Rohtak and Gohana.<sup>18</sup> The Raja of Nabha on hearing rumours of disturbances at Delhi proceeded from Nabha with all his available forces towards Ambala, but while he was on his way he was directed by the Commissioner to march to Ludhiana. The young Chief

17. From Commissioner and Superintendent Cis-Sutlej States to Secretary to the Chief Commissioner Punjab, No. 77 dated 9th March, 1858, Foreign Political Proceedings (hereafter to be abbreviated as F.P.P.), 2 July, 1858, Nos. 182 and 183.

18. From Commissioner and Superintendent Cis-Sutlej States to Officiating Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Punjab No. 65 dated 3rd March, 1858, F.P.P., 2 July, 1858, Nos. 171 and 172.

remained at Ludhiana in person throughout the campaign and protected this city. He posted parts of his troops for the protection of the roads between Ludhiana and Nabha, Nabha and Ambala, Ludhiana and Nabha and Ferozepore. He sent a force of 300 Horse and Foot towards Phillaur to escort heavy guns and ammunition from that fort to Ludhiana and thence to Delhi. His troops resolutely fought against the Jullundur mutineers near river Sutlej. The Raja also sent his troops to Panipat, Ambala, Ferozepore and Lahore and advanced a loan of rupees 2,50,000 to the British Government.<sup>19</sup> The conspicuous and meritorious services rendered by the three Phulkian Chiefs were duly acknowledged and appreciated by the British Government. About the value of the Maharaja of Patiala's loyalty the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab expressed his opinion thus: "Had he proved false or even hesitated to join our cause when the mutiny broke out, the whole Cis-Sutlej States would have risen, and our communication with Delhi would have been cut off. The Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor has always looked upon the Maharaja's faithfulness at such a crisis as a turning point in our favour."<sup>20</sup> In an open Darbar held at Ambala on 19th January, 1860, Lord Canning, the Viceroy and Governor-General, publicly appreciated the valuable services rendered by the Maharaja of Patiala and the Rajas of Nabha and Jind. The British Government decided to reward these services of the Phulkian Chiefs by giving them additional titles and territories. But before this was done the three Phulkian Chiefs combined together and prepared a document containing eight requests for the consideration of the Government. It is significant to note that this 'Paper of Requests' was sent to the Commissioner and Superintendent Cis-Sutlej States in May, 1858, i.e., about five and a half month before the Queen's Proclamation (November 1, 1858) was issued, which announced a new policy towards the Native States. The Phulkian Chiefs had thought it a very propitious time to procure the much desired concessions from the British Government because they knew that the services rendered by them were at that time fresh in the minds of the authorities. This also incidentally

19. From Commissioner and Superintendent Cis-Sutlej States to Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Punjab, No. 69, dated 4th March, 1858, F.P.P., 2 July, 1858, Nos. 167 and 168.

20. From Secretary to Punjab Government to Secretary to Government of India, dated 29 March, 1859, Foreign Political Consultations, 29 April, 1859, No. 45.

reveals that it was not without a motive that the Phulkian Chiefs had supported their Paramount so very faithfully and enthusiastically. An analytical account of the eight requests incorporated in the Phulkian Chiefs' Paper of Requests, together with the opinions of the British authorities in regard to each one of them, is given below.

The first request the Phulkian Chiefs was that they should be given the power of inflicting capital sentences on their own subjects without requiring a reference to the Commissioner, Cis-Sutlej States. As has already been described elsewhere, it was after the First Anglo-Sikh War in 1847 that the Phulkian Chiefs had been deprived of their right of giving death punishment to their subjects without the approval and consent of the Agent. It is significant to note that it was on the express request of the Raja of Jind that the stipulations to this effect were not inserted in the *Sanads* issued in 1847 but were agreed upon otherwise. That shows unmistakably that the Chiefs thought this as an un-necessary encroachment upon their rights, so that they considered the inclusion of this restriction in the *Sanads* as disparaging to their sovereign position. As Griffin would have us believe, "The deprivation of the power of inflicting capital punishment was regarded by the Chiefs as limiting their independence more than any other of the regulations which were issued after the Satluj campaign".<sup>21</sup> The Phulkian Chiefs tried their best to evade this rule in practice. They either abstained from giving death punishment or gave it secretly but would not like to refer the cases to the Agent. From 1847 to 1856 the Maharaja of Patiala did not refer a single case to the Commissioner whereas the Raja of Jind referred only two cases. The Commissioner, Cis-Sutlej States while forwarding the Paper of Requests to the Chief Commissioner recommended the removal of this restriction. He observed that the present rule had been very embarrassing to him, as he was not empowered to try such cases. No criminal was brought before him nor any of the witnesses. Only a cut and dried narrative was furnished to him and on persuing that he was expected to concur in a sentence of death. The Chief might present the case in any manner by so arranging the proofs that he had but to give his consent. He contended that there was nothing to prevent the Chief from putting a man to death secretly and he referred to evasion of the rule by the Maharaja of Patiala. Finally he said that during the

21. Griffin, *op. cit.*, p. 224.

late disturbances (1857-58) he had authorised them to execute the heinous criminals without reference to him and that he saw no possible object in withholding these powers for the future.<sup>22</sup> The Chief Commissioner concurred with the Commissioner while forwarding the case to the Government of India. He significantly added that the Chiefs set greater store on this concession, so much so that the Raja of Jind had told him that he would hardly care to accept the grant of Dadree unless this power was given with it.<sup>23</sup> The Government of India accepted the request of the Chiefs and conceded to them the power of inflicting capital sentences on their own subjects without referring any case to the Commissioner.<sup>24</sup> Thus the Phulkian Chiefs began to be treated again at par with the Nizam of Hyderabad, Sindhia, Holkar, Gaikwar and others, who all enjoyed full and absolute power of life and death in their territories. It gave them a great satisfaction and no mean happiness.

The second request of the Phulkian Chiefs was that in the event of an infant heir succeeding to any of the three Chiefships a Council of Regency consisting of three of the old and trusty and most capable ministers of the State may be selected by the Commissioner with the advice of the other two surviving Chiefs and that strangers and relatives of the infant heir should not be admitted to this Council. It implied three things. Firstly, the two surviving Phulkian Chiefs should have a decisive hand, with the consent of the Commissioner, of course, in choosing the members of the Council of Regency. It is interesting to note that the Phulkian Chiefs, though generally very jealous of one another, would remarkably join hands together in dealing with the British and in other matters of common interest. They, therefore, preferred to keep the decisions about the choice of the members of the Regency Council in their own house instead of leaving it to the outsiders. Secondly, the members of the Council of Regency were to be chosen from the old, trusty and most capable ministers for the simple reason that they being experienced and faithful would be able to run the administration smoothly and efficiently.

22. From Commissioner and Superintendent Cis-Sutlej States to Secretary to Chief Commissioner, Punjab, No. 149, dated 20th May, 1858, Foreign Political Consultations, 27 May, 1859, No. 85.

23. From Secretary to Chief Commissioner Punjab to Secretary to Government of India, No. 104, dated 16th June, 1858, F.P.C., 27 May, 1859, No. 86.

24. From Secretary to Government of India, to Secretary to Government of Punjab, No. 3047, dated 25th May, 1859, F.P.C., 27 May, 1859, No. 87.

Thirdly, and most significantly, the strangers and relatives of the infant ruler were to be excluded from the Council. The exclusion of strangers was intended very probably to remove the apprehension of the Phulkian Chiefs lest the British should thrust their own nominee in the Council who might appropriate virtually all or most of the powers of the State. The exclusion of the relatives of the infant ruler may be explained by the fact that there being so many widows and relatives in the family, the inclusion of one might provoke jealousies of and intrigues from, others, as indeed had already happened during the minority of some Chiefs of Patiala and Nabha. The Commissioner considered the request as 'characterised by much common sense' ! He said that it had always appeared to him essential to employ the hereditary ministers for the management of a Native State during the minority of the heir, adding significantly, "It is a mistake to introduce a nominee of our own or to engraft on the native system any of our own institutions and customs. They cannot take permanent root and will produce only hybrid results prejudicial to good government."<sup>25</sup> The Chief Commissioner agreed with the Commissioner in the propriety of the proposed arrangement and on their recommendations. His Excellency in Council accepted this request of the Phulkian Chiefs.

The third request of the Phulkian Chiefs was that in default of a male survivor in the direct line, the reigning Chief should be permitted to adopt a successor from among the descendants of their common ancestor (Baba Phool). Closely connected with this was the fourth request that in case of sudden death of any of the three Chiefs without leaving a male issue and without having adopted a successor, the two surviving Chiefs might in the like manner be allowed to nominate his successor from among the descendants of Phool. Regarding the adoption of heirs by the native princes, the policy of the British Government hitherto had not been clear and consistent. As Tupper writes, "The policy respecting adoption had been incoherent, the discussions voluminous; ...We were disagreed about our duty, our policy, our rights and about the law and practice by which we professed to be guided. No wonder, the minds of the princes and people were disquieted by all this inconsistency

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25. From Commissioner Cis-Sutlej States to Chief Commissioner, Punjab, No. 149, dated 20th May, 1858, *op. cit.*



and uncertainty and conflict of opinion amongst those whose authority was practically absolute in dealing with their dearest interests and rights".<sup>26</sup> The Court of Directors had written in 1834, "wherever it is optional with you to give or to withhold your consent to adoption, the indulgence should be the exception, not the rule and should never be granted but as a special mark of favour and approbation."<sup>27</sup> Justifying Dalhousie's Doctrine of Lapse, the Duke of Argyll wrote that he simply reiterated the maxim which "had governed the action of the Indian Government in every previous case in which failure of Natural heirs had been made the occasion of appropriating petty states, principalities and jagirs."<sup>28</sup> But in practice the matter was decided invariably by the whims of individual Governor-General. Towards the Phulkian states too, the policy of the Government in this respect had not been definite and consistent. In the earlier years the widows enjoyed the right of succeeding their deceased husbands and the custom of *chaddar dalna* or *karewa*, i.e., the brother of the deceased marrying his widow to become the rightful heir, was quite common among the Phulkian families, but as the British Government declared the succession to remain always with the male heirs, the families of Patiala, Nabha and Jind abandoned this custom altogether.<sup>29</sup> In spite of the fact that the Phulkian Chiefs were polygamous, they did not generally have many sons and sometime they had none. So they began to be haunted by the fears lest their States for want of natural male heirs should be annexed by the British Government at some stage. And their fears were not entirely unfounded. In 1834 Raja Sangat Singh of Jind had died without any son, though he had three wives. The British Government, thereupon, wanted to annex the whole of Jind on the plea that there was no legitimate heir, but then adopting a lenient attitude, the Government recognised the right of Sarup Singh to the Chiefship on the basis of collateral succession. The new ruler, however, was not allowed to succeed to all the territories but only to those which had been in the possession of his ancestor, Gajpat Singh. The remaining territories were annexed to the British Empire. Sarup Singh supported by other Phulkian Chiefs represented to the Government for the

26. Tupper, *op. cit.* pp. 105—106.

27. Lee Warner, *Life of Lord Dalhousie* (London, 1904), p. 148.

28. W.W. Hunter, *Dalhousie* (Rulers of India, London 1890) p. 129.

29. Griffin, *The Law of Inheritance to Sikh Chiefship* (Lahore, 1869), pp. 18-19.

restoration of all the territories of Bhag Singh but all in vain.<sup>30</sup> Similarly in March 1843 when the Bhai of Kythal died without any son, the British Government escheated the State and allowed his cousin to succeed only to a small portion of the territories.<sup>31</sup> These cases had caused a great alarm and no mean anxiety among the Phulkian Chiefs. According to Griffin, "The Cis-Sutlej Chiefs lived in a perpetual fear that one portion of their possessions in the event of heir dying childless, would pass to distant kinsmen with whom the were at constant feud, while the most ancient and dearest loved portion would become an escheat of the British Government which threatened in course of time to absorb them all."<sup>32</sup> The annexations of Satara, Jhansi, Nagpur, Jaitpur, Udaipur and Sumbhalpur by Dalhousie under the Doctrine of Lapse must have increased their anxiety to secure the right of adoption from the British Government. Now after rendering meritorious services to their Paramount in the course of the Great Revolt, the Phulkian Chiefs demanded among their rewards the right of adopting the heirs in the absence of natural sons.

The Commissioner while forwarding this request of the Chiefs observed that the question should be disposed of by the Supreme Government according to the maxims of general policy. He said that he perceived no reason for making an exception in favour of the Cis-Sutlej Chiefs. The right of adoption had not been allowed to Nagpur, Jhansi and other States which had lapsed, and he would not concede it in this instance also, as in practice that would tend to the perpetuation of these dynasties. He pointed out that there were at that time 34 male descendants of Phool and their number would increase in future, so that the chances of escheat would become more and more remote. He concluded by saying that the privilege solicited was tantamount to the full recognition of the right of adoption and would lead to the ultimate exclusion of Government from all escheats.<sup>33</sup> The Chief Commissioner dittoed the view-point of the Commissioner and reiterated that whatever rules of Imperial policy were made in this respect, should apply equally to these Chiefs. He, however, suggested that if on reconsideration of the Governmental policy the right of adoption was allowed, a fine not exceeding one

30. See Griffin, *Rajas of the Punjab*, p. 331.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 348.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 226.

year's revenue of the Chiefship should be levied in each case, and such fines, he held, would be readily paid.<sup>34</sup> In accordance with the recommendations of the Commissioner and Chief Commissioner, the Government of India declined to accept these requests of the Phulkian Chiefs on the ground that "these are important innovations on the custom which has always prevailed among the Chiefs of the Cis-Sutlej territories."<sup>35</sup> But the Home Government adopting a more considerate attitude, ruled that in view of the fidelity of the Chiefs and their anxiety to obtain the boon, the desired privilege be conceded to them as a special case. Lord Canning made the announcement of the grant of this privilege in Ambala Darbar in January 1860, but it was a few months after that it was finally incorporated in the *Sanads* dated 5th May, 1860. According to Clause III of these *Sanads*, the power of adoption was granted for ever to the Chiefs and their successors. It was also laid down that in case any one of them should suddenly die without a son and without an adopted heir, the two surviving Chiefs, in concert with the Commissioner, might select a successor from among the Phulkian family. In that case a *nazrana* to the extent of 1/3 of the income of the State for one year will be paid into the treasury of the British Government.<sup>36</sup> The condition of the payment of *nazrana* was obviously unjust, yet the Phulkian Chiefs, on the whole, felt satisfied, as they valued the power of adoption conceded to them more highly than the new territory, the reward of their loyalty. It may be noted that the Phulkian Chiefs were not the first to be granted this privilege, as in November-December, 1859, the right of adoption had already been conceded to the Maharaja of Rewah and Maharaja Sindhia. Nevertheless, these Chiefs were among the first few to get this, for the adoption *Sanads* were issued to most of the States in March 1862.

Their fifth request was that women should not be allowed to interfere in the affairs of State either on the pretext of the Chief being young or upon any other plea, and that no complaints of any sort preferred by the women of the families of the Chiefs be received by the

33. From Commissioner Cis-Sutlej States to Secretary to Chief Commissioner, Punjab, No. 149, dated 20th May, 1858, *op. cit.*

34. From Secretary to Chief Commissioner Punjab to Secretary to Government of India, No. 104, dated 16th June, 1858, *op. cit.*

35. From Secretary to Government of India to Secretary to Government of Punjab, No. 3047, dated 25th May, 1859, *op. cit.*

36. Aitchison, *op. cit.*, pp. 162, 261 and 295.

British Government. The Commissioner observed that the exclusion of women from the Council of Regency or from any participation on the public affairs was a wise and sensible provision<sup>37</sup> and that nothing but evil could accrue from the nominal supremacy of women, uneducated and secluded as they were in the country. He recommended that the Government might give assurance to the Chiefs that it would entertain no complaints from the women nor interfere in their behalf except in extraordinary cases.<sup>38</sup> The Chief Commissioner concurred with the Commissioner's opinion that women, situated as they were, ought not to take any part in politics. He observed that as a general rule the Government did not interfere in these matters but cases might occur in which common humanity would dictate interference as in the case of the two sisters-in-law of the Raja of Faridkot which had come before the Supreme Government last year.<sup>39</sup> His Excellency in Council concurred with the view point of the Chief Commissioner and accepted in principle the request of the Phulkian Chiefs.<sup>40</sup>

Their sixth request was that the British Government should bind itself never to interfere on behalf of relatives, connections and dependants of the Chiefs, as it had always bound itself by treaty and practice hitherto. As regards this request the view-point of the Commissioner and Chief Commissioner was that the Government very seldom interfered in such matters and would not do so in future unless it was very imperative.<sup>41</sup> This view-point was concurred in by the Governor-General in Council.

Their seventh request was that each one of them might be favoured with a *sanad* guaranteeing to them and their heirs in perpetuity the hereditary possessions and other territories bestowed upon them by the Government, under the hand and seal of the sovereign of Great Britain. It was a magnificent idea to secure guarantee of territories

37. Griffin, *Rajas of the Punjab*, p. 229.

38. From Commissioner Cis-Sutlej States to Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Punjab, No. 149, dated 20th May, 1858, *op. cit.*

39. From Secretary to Chief Commissioner Punjab to Secretary to Govt. of India, No. 104, dated 16th June, 1858, *op. cit.*

40. From Secretary to Government of India to Secretary to Government Punjab, No. 3047, dated 25th May, 1859, *op. cit.*

41. From Commissioner Cis-Sutlej States to Secretary to Chief Commissioner, Punjab, No. 149, dated 20th May, 1858, *op. cit.*; from Secretary to Chief Commissioner Punjab to Secretary to Government of India No. 104, dated 16th June, 1858, *op. cit.*

directly from Her Majesty the Queen under her seal and signature. The Commissioner recommended its acceptance on the ground that the Chiefs would highly appreciate the honour and feel double confidence in the Government. He observed that the Chiefs attached great importance to this request and that the special object of the Maharaja of Patiala in wishing to visit England in 1854 was to obtain such a *sanad* from the Queen. The Chief Commissioner also held that it would be highly politic to comply with this request. The Viceroy and Governor-General referred this request to the Secretary of State opining that it should not be complied with. He observed that if this request was granted, similar requests of Sindhia, Holkar and even of the lesser Chiefs would also have to be complied with. He said, "I strongly deprecate leading the Chiefs to think that when any substantial act of justice or favour is done to them, more force and sanctity will be given to the act by its being done in England than by its being done by the Queen's Representative in India." He recommended to Her Majesty's Government that the request be not acceded to, but that the Cis-Sutlej Chiefs should be answered to the effect that their possessions and rights are thoroughly secure under the guarantee and hand of the Queen's Representative, with such repetition of the estimation in which their loyalty and services are held by Her Majesty, as Her Majesty's Government may deem fit."<sup>42</sup> The Secretary of State accepted the recommendation of the Governor-General and the request of the Chiefs was turned down.

Their eighth and final request was that no claims against<sup>43</sup> their subjects might be heard in the civil courts situated in the British territory. The rule prevalent at that time was that no such claims were entertained in the British courts except when the cause of action arose in the British territory or the defendant possessed property therein. The Commissioner observed that the subjects of the Native States freely resorted to the British courts to prosecute claims against the parties resident in the British territories and as such they enjoyed a great advantage over the people living in the British territories—the advantage which would still further be enhanced if this request were

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42. From Commissioner Cis-Sutlej States to Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Punjab, No. 149, dated 20th May, 1858, *op cit.*

43. From Secretary to Chief Commissioner to Secretary to Government of India, No. 104, dated 16th June, 1858. *op cit.*

Canning's Note dated May 23, 1859 F.P.C. 27 May 1859, K.W. Nos. 84 87.

conceded. He therefore, opined that he was not in favour of any change in the existing system.<sup>44</sup> The Chief Commissioner agreed with the Commissioner that no change was necessary in the existing system and added that he did not believe that the Chiefs laid much stress on this request.<sup>45</sup> His Excellency in Council concurred with the Chief Commissioner in thinking that no change was necessary in the existing arrangement.

Thus all the requests of the Phulkian Chiefs were not complied with, yet most of their demands which appeared reasonable enough to the British authorities were accepted. And for this the Phulkian Chiefs had to thank themselves. The way they had conducted themselves all along showed beyond doubt that they were not just novices in the algebra of diplomacy. They had evinced a remarkable degree of sagacity by supporting their Paramount during the Great Crisis (1857-58) and by putting their minds together in preparing and presenting the 'Paper of Requests' to the British Government at a very opportune time. The Queen's proclamation issued on November 1, 1858, gave general assurances to the all the Native Princes that the British desired no extension of their territorial dominion and that the rights, honour and dignity of the Princes would be respected. This, together with the right of adoption, the promised non-intervention of the Government on behalf of their women, relatives and dependants, the full power of life and death over their subjects, the right to have a Council of Regency of the three trusty and capable ministers during the minority of a Chief—all that had been conceded to them—appeared to have made the position of the Phulkian Chiefs a happy one. The *Sanads* of May 5, 1860, issued individually to the Maharaja of Patiala and to the Rajas of Nabha and Jind formally embodied all these concessions given to the Chiefs in response to their 'Paper of Requests'. These *Sanads* also gave new territories, new titles and new assurances to the Chiefs. The high sounding language used in these *Sanads* inflated them to such an extent that they felt the *Sanads* had conferred upon them 'the full independence for ever and ever.' In this, of course, they were soon told they were mistaken and their subsequent relations with the Paramount Power revealed at every step that they had been grievously

44. From Commissioner Cis-Sutlej States to Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Punjab, No 149, dated 20th May, 1858, *op. cit.*

45. From Secretary to Chief Commissioner to Secretary to Government of India, No. 104 dated 16th June, 1858, *op. cit.*

mistaken. In due course of time, with revolutionary economic, social, cultural and political modifications in the conditions, the internal matters of all the States began to be constantly and closely reviewed, supervised and controlled by the Paramount Power, which not only reminded the Princes at every step of their absolute dependence and subordination but also declared in unequivocal terms that the relations were not based upon the treaties and *Sanads* but upon the requirements and responsibilities of the Paramount Power.<sup>46</sup>

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46. See S.N. Prasad, *op. cit.*, Introduction, pp. xv-xxxi by Bisheshwar Prasad.

## Mesolithic Panjab

DEVENDRA HANDA

The post-Pleistocene and post-Palaeolithic hunting and gathering economy characterized by small-sized artefacts, the *microliths*, is known as the Mesolithic phase in Prehistory. The oldest microlithic industry in India is held to be of equal antiquity with the western Mesolithic culture and probably derived from that, it occupies an intermediate position between the Palaeolithic and the Neolithic as in Europe. There are, however, later microlithic industries also which run into Neolithic and early historical times even.<sup>1</sup> On the evidence of pottery occurring in both, the microlithic and neolithic phases, and showing affinities, Foote classed the Microlithic phase with the Neolithic,<sup>2</sup> but De Terra termed it as "Proto-Neolithic" because of its distinction from the Palaeolithic.<sup>3</sup> It has been named similarly by Todd,<sup>4</sup> Gordon,<sup>5</sup> Cammiade<sup>6</sup> and Noone.

In the Panjab, implementiferous layers and human burials of Homo-Sapiens of long-headed type were found in association with hand-made pottery in the post-glacial loessic soil overlying the Potwar silt at Chitta, south of Rawalpindi and in and near Uchali in the central Salt Range. The implements are reminiscent of a Late Sohan tradition

1. L. A. Cammiade, 'Pigmy Implements of the Lower Godavari', *Man in India*, Vol. IV (1924), pp. 83-105; D.H. Gordon, 'The microlithic industries of India', *Man* vol. xxxviii, no. 19 (Feb., 1938), pp. 21-4 and 'The Stone Industries of the Holocene in India and Pakistan', *Ancient India*, No. 6 (1950), pp. 6 ff.; H. D. Sankalia, *Investigations into Prehistoric Archaeology of Gujarat*, Baroda, 1946, pp. 133 ff.; V. D. Krishnaswami, 'Stone Age India', *AI*, no. 3 (1947), pp. 36-37 and 'Progress in Prehistory', *AI*, no. 9 (1953), p. 64; C. von Fürer Haimendorf, 'Notes on the Stone Age in India', *Man in India*, vol. xxxviii, no. 4 (1948), p. 208; Sankalia and Iravati Karve, 'Early Primitive Microlithic Culture and People of Gujrat', *American Anthropologist*, vol. LII, no. 1 (1949), pp. 28-34, and F.E. Zeuner, *Stone Age and Pleistocene Chronology in Gujarat*, Poona, 1950.
2. R. B. Foote, *The Foote Collection of Indian Prehistoric and Protohistoric Antiquities: Notes on Their Ages and Distribution*, Madras, 1916, p. 2.
3. H. De Terra and T. T. Paterson, *Studies on the Ice Age in India and Associated Human Cultures*, Washington, 1939, pp. 300 ff.
4. K. R. Todd, 'Prehistoric Man Round Bombay', *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society of East Anglia* (Ipswich, 1932), VII, pp. 35-42.
5. Gordon (1938), op. cit.
6. Cammiade, op. cit.



and the pottery seems to be Neolithic; the industry, therefore, has been ascribed to a transitional Proto-Neolithic stage.<sup>7</sup> Besides near Rawalpindi, stray microlithic finds were made in the general vicinity of Campbellpore<sup>8</sup> and Taxila.<sup>9</sup> Recently, a flake industry has been discovered at Ror in district Kangra, which may be placed somewhere between the Sohanian and the Neolithic periods, probably near the microlithic phase.<sup>10</sup> Whether the absence of microliths in the region is due to want of exploration or because of certain geographical causes, it is difficult to say.<sup>11</sup>

From the relics obtained from the aforesaid sites, it is very difficult to make out much about the way of life of the people during the Mesolithic period in the Panjab. An attempt, however, is made in the following lines to reconstruct the life of the Mesolithic people on the evidence of the remains found in the country and elsewhere.

#### **Mesolithic Man in the Panjab**

Evidence is totally absent to prove that the Mesolithic Man in the Panjab was a direct descendant of the Palaeolithic Man in this region. Many sites with Palaeolithic relics have been discovered in the Panjab, implying the habitation of those places during that period. One simply wonders as to what happened to the Palaeolithic people. There is a great scarcity of Mesolithic relics, more than that of the Upper Palaeolithic relics even. How did the Lower and Middle Palaeolithic population decrease so much? It may be difficult to ascertain the causes even by further work in the region. It is, however, certain that men were much more rare in the Mesolithic than in the Palaeolithic period in the Panjab.

7. De Terra and Paterson, op. cit., pp. 277 and 298. cf. Krishnaswami (1947), p. 40. The association of these microliths with handmade pottery is, however, doubtful. The finds have been neither described nor illustrated anywhere.
8. D. H. Gordon, *Prehistoric Background of Indian Culture*, Bombay, 1958, p. 21.
9. *Ibid.*
10. G. C. Mohapatra, 'Preliminary Report of the Exploration and Excavation of Stone Age Sites in Eastern Punjab', *Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute*, Poona, vol. xxv, pp. 1-17.
11. H. D. Sankalia, *Prehistory and Protohistory in India and Pakistan*, Bombay, 1962, p. 129. Cf. Gordon (1958, p. 21) who remarks, "If mesolithic people lived on the banks of the five rivers, it is probable that all evidence of their existence has been swept away by floods or buried under alluvium."

### Tools of Mesolithic Man

Mesolithic period is characterized, besides other things, by microliths, i.e., very small stone tools comprising blades, burins, crescents, triangles, cones and arrow-heads of triangular, trapezoid or rhomboid section. They were probably devised by "the Mesolithic hunters who made a drastic technical change by their adoption of multiple settings of small and, some times, minute flints both for cutting edges, points and barbs."<sup>12</sup> Many useful additions to the hunter's equipment were made, particularly for fishing and fowling, by the Mesolithic people. Besides nets and fish-traps, they invented the bone-fish-hook, perforated harpoons, complex fish-spears and arrows with various types of bone and flint heads especially devised for shooting birds.<sup>13</sup> But their most valuable achievement was "the perfection of the heavy hafted axe and adze which enabled them to fell trees and develop carpentry, including the shaping and dug-out canoes and paddles."<sup>14</sup>

Microliths are of two-types — non-geometric and geometric. Chronologically, the non-geometric microliths come first and then the geometric ones.<sup>15</sup> Again, these microliths are found without or with pottery, further indicating their antiquity or lateness.<sup>16</sup> Manufacture of microlithic flint tools continued not only during the Neolithic age but well into the historical times even. It is difficult to ascribe any definite age to the earliest microlithic industries. The proto-microlithic industries, however, fall geologically all within the Holocene.<sup>18</sup>

### Habitat

The Mesolithic people lived on open rocky areas, in caves and rock-shelters, coastal areas, sandy areas and on river-banks. They, however, preferred sandy or gravelly soils where the vegetation would have been light.<sup>19</sup>

12. Jacquetta Hawkes and Leonard Woolley, *History of Mankind*, vol. I, Unesco, 1963, p. 145.

13. *Ibid.*

14. *Ibid.*

15. B. B. Lal, 'Prehistoric Lithic Industries of the Indian Sub-Continent,' *Journal of World History*, vol. I, no. 3 (Paris, Jan. 1954), p. 511.

16. *Ibid.* The pre-pottery microliths are said to be fairly early but nothing positive can be said in this connection.

17. Gordon (1950), pp. 72-6; Krishnaswami (1947), p. 37.

18. Krishnaswamy (1953), p. 65.

19. Hawkes and Woolley, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

**Food**

The mesolithic man experienced a considerable change in his diet with the forest growth of post-glacial times. More and more use of the bow with specially designed fowling arrows increased the number of birds available to him for eating.<sup>20</sup> In warmer places, probably honey was also taken. In addition to the vegetable foods eaten during the Palaeolithic times, the Mesolithic man ate walnuts, wild pears and the seeds of water-lilies.<sup>21</sup>

**Domestication of Dog**

The Mesolithic man had domesticated dog.<sup>22</sup> Though this in itself was not of any great importance yet it was of great interest as a preliminary advance towards what was to follow.<sup>23</sup>

**Burials**

The burials of the Mesolithic people did not differ much from those of the Palaeolithic people except that sometimes they were more elaborately furnished. The dead were not feared as we find that they were buried in the cave-dwellings where the Mesolithic people continued living. The body was generally protected, and sometimes the head also, by stone slabs forming roughly a tomb. The corpse was accompanied by grave furniture and food. The dead man was often buried wearing pendants and necklaces, hair-pins and other ornamental objects of bone or horn and probably fully clothed with tree and or animal skins. As in the Palaeolithic times, ochre was sprinkled on the body or was painted on that. Sometimes tusks and horns were laid with the dead, probably as a symbol of life force,<sup>24</sup>

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20. *Ibid.*, p. 141.

21. *Ibid.*

22. *Ibid.*, p. 142.

23. *Ibid.*

24. *Ibid.*, p. 209.

## Guru Tegh Bahadur's Hukamname

G. S. ANAND

The letters of Sikh Gurus, popularly known as *Hukamnamas* in the handwriting of Gurus themselves are of considerable religious and historical importance. There are twentytwo *Hukamnamas*<sup>1</sup> of Guru Tegh Bahadur alone which have been verified to be genuine and are preserved in the following centres :—

- |                                    |     |   |
|------------------------------------|-----|---|
| 1. Harmandar Sahab, Patna          | ... | 8 |
| 2. Gurudwara Bari Sangat, Benaras  |     | 8 |
| 3. Sikh Reference Library Amritsar |     | 6 |

Of these seventeen are written in the handwriting of Guru Tegh Bahadur, the remaining five are written by others but authenticated by him by addition of a postscript in the characteristic handwriting of the Guru. All the twentytwo epistles begin with an invocation to the Divine architect of the Universe as *Guru Sat*, or *Ek Onkar Guru Sat* or *Ek Onkar Satguru* in the terminology of Guru Nanak and his successors. A careful study of these *Hukamnamas* reveals that :

- (i) The Guru had a steady mode of writing.
- (ii) The flow of the pen is rapid without any blur.
- (iii) All the letters are quite distinct and legible.
- (iv) The style is that of a practised hand with no rewriting or overwriting.
- (v) The ink used is of durable type as writing has not faded.
- (vi) The pen must have been a sharp and pointed quill which could pack many words in a small space.
- (vii) The vowel symbols are not used.
- (viii) All the letters are undated.
- (ix) The places from where these letters were despatched are not mentioned.

The letters indicate that the Guru was travelling from place to place to spread the gospel of Nanak and had a concourse of followers

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1. The photo-copies of the *Hukamname* have been published with transliteration by Dr. Ganda Singh in a book form entitled as *Hukam name*, Punjabi University, Patiala 1967, pp. 76-119.

with him. In most cases, they are directives to various Sikh settlements for the supply of material required generally for holding religious meetings, etc.<sup>2</sup>

Other characteristic feature is that the letters are addressed to the members of Sikh *Sangats*<sup>3</sup> jointly by their names which indicates the depth of familiarity cultivated by the Guru with his adherents. As a result of this personal identification, the Guru's teachings took deep roots amongst his followers throughout the land from the Bias to the Brahmaputra,

In some letters there is a mention of an old lady, carrying the name of *Bebe Peri Bai*, who probably hailed from Patna.<sup>4</sup> This goes to show that women were also admitted to the assemblies, and the membership was open to them as well.

In one *Hukamnama* the word 'Khalsa' has been used<sup>5</sup> to designate the people who followed the teachings of the Gurus, as "true pure" ones. This disproves the general belief that the word 'Khalsa' meaning 'pure' was coined by the tenth Guru to denote the Sikhs baptised by him under the militant style of 'Singhs'. The word 'Khalsa' used by Guru Gobind Singh, however, carries different sense from that of his father. Nonetheless the word 'Khalsa' was in use.

The Guru's familiarity with both Hindu and Muslim nobility is evident from some of his *Hukamnamas*. From two of his letters,<sup>6</sup> the Guru appears to be travelling with one, to quote the Guru's own words, 'Raja Ji'. This expression has been interpreted differently by scholars. From an observation<sup>7</sup> in the earliest biography of Guru Gobind Singh, entitled *Guru Bilas Patshahi Das* written by Koer Singh in A.D. 1751, i.e., seventysix years after the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur, it has been inferred by Dr. Ved Parkash that 'Raja Ji' was

2. *Hukamname*, pp. 90, 94, 106.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 76, 78, 80, 82, 84, 86, 88, 92, 94, 98, 100,

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 90, 94, 102, 104, 106.

5. *Hukamname*, p. 76.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 84, 86.

7. "Man Singh, a Rajput of Jaipur, who had carved out a principality for himself somewhere in the Deccan and the capital of which was Garh Gopachal, had been sent under the orders of Aurangzeb to make conquest in the quarters of Bengal. He resided in Delhi where he had several gardens, houses and wells" (quoted by Dr. Ved Parkash in his thesis, which is still unpublished on "*The Sikhs in Bihar*," p. 75).

in all probability Raja Man Singh. This inference is not supported by any other contemporary record. *Alamgir Nama*, which gives a year wise account of important events of Alamgir's reign makes no mention about Man Singh. The authors of *Mehma Parkash Kavita*,<sup>8</sup> *Suraj Parkash*<sup>9</sup> and *Panth Parkash*<sup>10</sup> identify the Raja with Bishan Singh of Jodhpur. But this obviously is an anachronism because Raja Bishen Singh was not yet born. Malcolm in his *Sketch of the Sikhs*<sup>11</sup> and Archer, the author of *The Sikhs*,<sup>12</sup> name the Raja as Jai Singh of Jaipur who was then, according to Sir J.N. Sarkar, in the Deccan as Commander of the Mughal Army in the Bijapur war.<sup>13</sup> From there he was recalled on March 23, 1667, and died at Burhanpur, enroute to Agra, on August 28 of the same year.<sup>14</sup> Some writers like Sardar Gurbakhsh Singh<sup>15</sup> try to find a substitute in Raja Subal Singh Sesodia, a commander of 1500, who had accompanied Buzurg Umed Khan son of Shaista Khan, on an expedition to Chatagaon, undertaken, according to Sarkar, on December 24, 1665.<sup>16</sup> This date almost coincides with that of Guru Tegh Bahadur's departure from Punjab<sup>17</sup> or, better still, Delhi, on his missionary tour towards the east. According to Macauliffe, the Raja who took the Sikh Guru Tegh Bahadur with him on his way at Patna was Ram Singh Kachchwah, the son of Mirza Raja Jai Singh.<sup>18</sup> His findings, though corroborated in the *Maasir-i-Alamgiri*, are incompatible with the fact that Raja Ram Singh received the *Mughal Farman* at Delhi in the first week of January, 1668, to lead a fresh expedition to recover the imperial prestige in Assam,<sup>19</sup> and by the time Raja Ram Singh reached Patna on

8. Sarup Das Bhalla, *Mehma Parkash Kavita*, Sakhi 204.
9. Kavi Santokh Singh, *Suraj Parkash*, Ras 12, Ansu. 3.
10. Gyani Gyan Singh, *Panth Parkash*, ed. 1923, pp. 146-47.
11. Malcolm, *Sketch of the Sikhs*, p. 215.
12. Archer, *The Sikhs*, p. 182.
13. Sarkar, J. N., *The History of Aurangzeb*, 1930, IV, pp. 129-135.
14. Saqi Mustad Khan, *Maasir-i-Alamgiri*, translated and annotated by Sir J. N. Sarkar, p. 41; Sir J. N. Sarkar, *The History of Aurangzeb*, 1930, IV, pp. 147-48.
15. Sardar Gurbakhsh Singh, *Sikh Relics in Eastern Bengal*, The Dacca Review, Vol. V, October-November, 1915, pp. 224-32; reprinted in *Panjab Past and Present*, Vol. I, Part 1, April 1967, pp. 72-81.
16. Sir J. N. Sarkar, *The History of Aurangzeb*, III, Second ed., p. 207.
17. *Bhat Vahi*, *Jado Bansionki Khata Krawat Bartion ka*.
18. Macauliffe, M.A., *The Sikh Religion; Its Gurus, Sacred Writings and Authors*, Oxford, 1909, IV, 349-52.
19. "On January 6, 1668, he (Raja Ram Singh) received formal orders from the  
[Contd. on page 8]

his way to Assam, Guru Tegh Bahadur had been out on his missionary tour of eastern Bihar as well as of Bengal for about a year and a half, having left Patna, in October 1666. The meeting of Raja Ram Singh with the Sikh Guru did not take place at Patna. In all probability the Raja happened to meet the Guru when he was at Dacca. Thus, a simple fact has become complicated as a result of the ingenious findings of different authorities. One might well ask why such unnecessary controversy should arise in interpreting the name of 'Raja Ji', when in all probabilities the expression itself may be a full name. Had it not been so Guru Tegh Bahadur would have used the full name as in fact he is doing in the case of his other followers or admirers. The logical conclusion, therefore, seems to be that the person concerned either bore this name or was affectionately and popularly known to the Patna *Sangat* by this appellation, even though his real name might have been different. In the latter case, one could safely assume that he was a big Zamindar with a large estate between Patna and Monghyr,<sup>20</sup> enjoying like many others of his class, the title of 'Raja', to which the Guru graciously suffixed the word 'ji.' Moreover, the fact that in one of his letters<sup>21</sup> from Monghyr to the Patna *Sangat* the Guru requisitioned forty Bihar turbans, apparently with a view to give them as *saropas* or gifts to his important visitors would seem to indicate that he was not accompanied by any Raja in command of the Mughal army. Had it been so, the Guru's requirements could easily have been met through the Commander.

In some *Hukamname* he asks his devoted adherent, Dayal Das of Patna, to send some pottery and cloth manufactured locally for the use of Saif Khan,<sup>22</sup> a Nawab of Saifabad (Patiala). This throws some light on the industries of Bihar also. The manufacture of pottery and cloth in Bihar must have acquired a reputation of its own to induce the Guru to indent them from Bihar for a Nawab residing in the Panjab.

Some *Hukamnamas* also furnish valuable information on the duties

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Emperor appointing him commander of the Assam expedition." Dr. S. K. Bhuyan, *Lachit Barphukan and his Times*, 1947, p. 33.

20. The situation of the Raja's estate, or for the matter of that residence is reflected in the letter of Guru Tegh Bahadur, which he wrote after reaching Monghyr to the Patna, *Sangat*, *Hukamname*, p. 86.

21. *Hukamname*, pp. 90.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 108.

and functions of the *Masands* who acted as a medium between the Sikhs and the Guru and were engaged in preaching Sikhism on behalf of the Sikh Gurus.

Apart from the twentytwo *Hukamnamas* mentioned above, there are two other *Hukamnamas* purporting to be in the Guru's handwriting, one maintained at Gurdwara Dukhniwaran, Patiala and the other in the possession of a *Panda* of Kamakhya temple (the centre of *Tantrik* practices); Gauhati (Assam), which have not yet been accepted as authentic by competent scholars. But it may be questioned why the *Panda*, apparently a *Tantrik* votary of supernatural dieties, of the Kamakhya temple, as well as his predecessors, have been painstakingly preserving the document in spite of Guru's teaching being at variance with *Tantrik* practices. It may be that the Guru's spiritual stature, righteous mode and selfless conduct, free from malice and rancour, evoked popular esteem, sufficient to induce the *Pandas* to preserve the *Hukamnama* as a talisman for centuries.



## The Resurgence of the Chishti Silsilah in the Punjab In the 18th Century

M. ZAMEERUDDIN SIDDIQI, ALIGARH

The 18th century marked the resurgence of the Chishti Silsilah in the Punjab which had been an important centre of the Suhrawardi and Qadiri orders and later of the Naqshbandi saints of Sirhind. It is interesting to note that the revival of the Chishti silsilah should have come off at a time when the Naqshbandi divines of Sirhind were mapping pretentious claims of their wide-spread influence, popularity and predominance.

The Chishti silsilah had played a relatively minor role in the Punjab after the death of Baba Farid Ganj-i-shakar. It was in the 18th century that the silsilah attained to pre-eminence and popularity through the prodigious efforts of some notable divines, namely Khwaja Nur Muhammad of Mihar, Khwaja Muhammad Aqil of Kot Mithan, Hafiz Muhammad Jamal of Multan and Shah Muhammad Sulaiman of Taunsa. Consequently a large part of the western Punjab was studded with the Khanqahs of the Chishti mystics. Main centres of the Chishti activities included Mihar, Taunsa, Sangharh, Ahmadpur, Chachran, Makhad, Jalalpur, Golrha, Bahawalpur, Multan, Pakpattan, Dera Ghazi Khan, Hajipur, Rajanpur, Narwala, Muhammadpur, Ferozepur, Kot Mithan, Sultanpur and many other places.<sup>1</sup> According to Maulvi Ilah Bakhsh Billuchi, the author of *Khatimul Sulaimani*, the mission of the Chishti divines, particularly Shah Muhammad Sulaiman of Taunsa, reached not only the different parts of the country in the Punjab, U.P., Baluchistan, Sindh and Rajputana but transcended the geographical limits of India and made a deep impact on Afghanistan, Turkistan, Sarandip Island and Aden.<sup>2</sup>

Khwaja Nur Muhammad Meharwi may be credited with having established the Nizamia branch of the Chishti order in Punjab and Sindh and fostered the growth of the Silsilah to such an extent that other mystic fraternities seem to have been totally eclipsed. According

1. *Manaqibul-Mahbubin*, pp. 74, 106.

2. *Khatimi-Sulaimani*, p. 9.

to the statement of Haji Najmuddin, the towns, cities and the villages of the Punjab and Sind had innumerable disciples of the Khwaja. He was<sup>3</sup> held in highest veneration by the people who flocked to his khanqah to pay homage.<sup>4</sup>

Khwaja Nur Muhammad's ceaseless efforts were directed to the expansion of the Silsilah, the moral and spiritual growth of the disciples and the imparting of enoteric and esoteric instructions.<sup>5</sup> Contemporary Malfuz literature composed by Qazi Muhammad Umar Syedpuri and Maulana Mohd. Gahlawi on the life and work of Khwaja Nur Muhammad under the titles, *Khulasatul-Fawa'id* and *Khairul-Afkar* respectively, pays glowing tribute to his sublime efforts and extreme piety.

In the social and moral teachings specially stressed by Khwaja Nur Muhammad certain dominant traits stand out.<sup>6</sup>

1. The ethical ideals and standard of Islam were given primacy of importance in the code of conduct and rules of behaviour recommended to the disciples.

2. Adherence to the Shariat was particularly emphasised for a mystic entering the fold of the Tariqa.

3. Service to humanity at large was considered the most sublime devotion to God and social contacts and attention to the needs of the people reckoned among the essentials for a mystic to perform.

4. The implications of the Wahabatul-Wujud must not be divulged to the public as it was fraught with the danger of misleading people.<sup>7</sup>

The Khanqah of Khwaja Nur Muhammad was thronged by all classes of people including the nobles, chiefs, and the rich and the opulent.<sup>8</sup> Bahawal Khan, the ruler of Bhawalpur, was a devotee of the Khwaja.<sup>9</sup> He did not view the association with the aristocracy and the elite with disapprobation and sought to exercise a moralising influence over them. Khwaja Nur Muhammad Miharwi's example

3. *Manaqibul-Mahbubin*, pp. 105-106.

4. *Manaqibul-Mahbubin*, pp. 105-106; *Nafi-us-Salikin*, p. 8.

5. *Takmilai-Siyarul-Auliya*, p. 1220.

6. *Takmilai-Siyarul-Auliya*, pp. 137, 126; *Manaqibul-Mahbubin*, pp. 92-94

7. *Ibid.*

8. *Manaqibul-Mahbubin*, p. 86; *Takmilai-Siyarul-Auliya*, p. 1220.

*Nafi-us-Salikin*, p. 126

9. *Tarikh-i-Mashaikh-i-Chishti*, p. 534.

inspired other Chishti saints of the 18th and 19th centuries and found fuller expression in the prodigious efforts of Khwaja Mohd. Aqil, Hafiz Muhammad Jamal Multani and Shah Sulaiman of Taunsa who carried on the work of the expansion of the silsilah and the dispensation of the moral instructions to the people with unremitting zeal and utmost devotion.

In the precepts and practices particularly emphasised by Hafiz Jamal Multani, two significant developments are noticeable : Firstly, he deprecated the traditional rancour and the factious spirit that existed between the mystics and the theologians, exhorted them to minimise their differences, harmonise their outlook, dispense with the ideological overtones of the controversy of 'Ilm and 'Irfan.<sup>10</sup> Secondly, he sought to modify the worn out concept of total otherworldliness and detachment from the contemporary politics.<sup>11</sup> In pursuance of this concept he guided his adherents to play their part in the political situation of the Punjab when Multan was threatened by successive attacks of the Sikhs. In the scramble for power between the Sikhs and the Muslim aristocracy of the Punjab, the people suffered spoliation, pillage and carnage, populous cities were reduced to shambles and many religious places were desecrated.<sup>12</sup> The Muslims of Multan were besieged by the Sikhs several times but the Sikhs attack of Multan in A. H. 1226 was formidable. In the frenzy of despair and anguish of heart by the agonising persecution in other regions, the Muslims of Multan thought of evacuation of the city but Hafiz Jamal Multani emerged from the Khanqah and inspired them with courage and confidence. He aroused the weary and dispirited people of Multan to rise to the occasion and resist the invaders and pronounced a fatwa of Jihad. His efforts to counteract the growing unrest were not wasted and Multan was stoutly defended. Hafiz Jamal took active part in the fight by demonstrating his skill in archery.<sup>13</sup>

The work of Nur Muhammad Miharwi was carried to perfection by his illustrious successor, Shah Muhammad Sulaiman of Taunsa who flourished from A. H. 1184 to 1267 when the Punjab had passed into the Sikh occupation and the Muslims were overwhelmed with grief, inertia and despair. Social evils and decadence were rampant

10. *Manaqibul-Mahbubin*, p. 125.

11. *Manaqibul-Mahbubin*, pp. 127, 131, 137.

12. *Kamalati-Tayyibat*, pp. 43, 51.

13. *Manaqibul-Mahbubin*, pp. 127, 131, 137.

among the Muslim masses. The movement of Syed Ahmad and Shah Ismail had flopped and met with disaster.<sup>14</sup> Shah Sulaiman Taunsaawi distracted his attention from political and military confrontation to the enormous task of the regeneration of the Muslim community<sup>15</sup> He was concerned with the social and moral malaise of his time and directed the Muslims with effective missionary zeal to cling tenaciously to the path of the shariat,<sup>16</sup> reform their manners and morals, uphold the ethical ideals and moral standards of Islam and abstain from dissipating their efforts in reckless ventures and wanton pursuits and lead a life of piety, hard work and dedication.<sup>17</sup>

With this end in view Shah Sulaiman founded and established a Darul-Ulum or seat of higher learning at Taunsa in which fifty eminent teachers were employed to dispense instructions in theological and mystic works like Ahya-ul-Ulum, Fatuhati-Makkiya, Awariful Muarif, Kanz-ud-Daqaiq and Kafia.<sup>18</sup> It is important to note that the study of Fiqh was particularly stressed in a seminary established by a mystic divine.<sup>19</sup>

Besides the Darul-Ulum he set up numerous other Madarsas.<sup>20</sup>

In order to provide the necessary amenities to the students and the mystics, Shah Sulaiman established a big Langar wherefrom food, raiment and other necessities of the inmates of the Madrasa and the Khanqah were provided<sup>21</sup> It was a great establishment with its barbers, cobblers, washermen, blacksmiths and others and had a free supply of medicines to the diseased.<sup>22</sup>

His efforts came to fruition and Sangharh, Taunsa, Siyal, Golrha Jalapur, Haiderabad, and Shaikhawi became the chief centres of Islamic and mystic learning.<sup>23</sup>

Shah Sulaiman had attained immense popularity in the Punjab and his Khanqah became the rallying centre for the people of all

14. *Tarikh-i-Mashaikh-i-Chisht*, pp. 608-609.

15. *Nafi-us-Salikin*, pp. 85, 112.

16. *Nafi-us-Salikin*, pp. 45, 61, 155, 165.

17. *Nafi-us-Salikin*, pp. 5, 40, 160, 128, 14, 74, 59.

18. *Asarus-Sanadid*, p. *Khatimi-Sulaimani*, p. 148.

19. *Ibid*

20. *Tarikh-i-Mashaikh-i-Chisht*, p. 620.

21. *Khatimi-Sulaimani*, pp. 66, 67, 71.

22. *Khatimi-Sulaimani*, pp. 66, 67, 71.

23. *Tarikh-i-Mashaikh-i-Chisht*, p. 610.

classes, castes and communities. Multitudes of people flocked to it entering by one gate and making their exit by the other. When he moved out hosts of people came out to pay their homage to him. Once while passing through Bhatinda the train was much delayed due to the huge crowds at the station.<sup>24</sup>

He maintained cordial relations with the rulers of states and jagirdars ostensibly with a view to making them serviceable to the people. Nawab Bahawal Khan, the ruler of Bahawalpur State, and Alaf Khan, a jagirdar of Dera Ghazi Khan, were enlisted as his disciples.<sup>25</sup>

Shah Sulaiman upheld the gospel of universal toleration and treated the Hindus with affectionate care. He frequently observed that peace with the Muslims and the Hindus alike is of essence to the precepts and practices of the Chishti silsilah.

Thus the period represents the exuberant growth of the Chishti silsilah, of its traditional doctrines and concepts aimed at reconciliation between the Ulama and the Mashaikh, active participation in the military adventures in times of emergency and animated enthusiasm to effect social reforms and extend the spirit of and zealously uphold the ethical standards and moral values of Islam. The Chishti saints of the period gave a new complexion to the traditional doctrines of the silsilah.

It would further suggest an inference that the conceptional structure of the Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi Order with its unfailing emphasis on the doctrine of Qayyumiyat and its uncompromising attitude to the idea of cultural synthesis was repugnant to the spirit of the times.

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24, *Khatimi-Sulaimani*, pp. 71, 13.

25. *Tarikh-i-Mashaikh-i-Chishti*, p. 620.

## AVITABILE

MAJOR GULCHARAN SINGH

"A renegade sergeant in the Bourbon army, who desered to seek his fortune in the East, where he prevailed exceedingly and rose to be lord over legions and viceroy over provinces but betrayed his master and returned to Agerola<sup>1</sup>, with a mountain of ducats; that he reared this edifice with the proceeds of infamy and set up in it the state and the seraglio of a Sultan—until (in a whisper) at half past eleven on Holy Thursday his wife brought him poison in a dish of roast kid and two O'clock the General was dead." This was General Avitabile.

Paolo Crescenzo Martino Avitabile, a Neapolitan, was born on 25th October, 1791, at Acampora (one of the five hamlets which go to form Agerola, 400 feet above the sea level) in the kingdom of Naples, Italy. He was the fifth in a family of five sons and three daughters of a well-to-do peasant stock of parents. As a child he was known with the nick-name of "Scapigliato", meaning a hatless person.

In 1807, Avitabile joined the newly raised provincial militia of his native State. Soon after, Napoleon invaded Italy and the Bourbons fled; he appointed Messena as the governor of Naples. Later, when Messena was replaced by Murat, the militia was merged with the regular army. As a result of this, Avitabile became a regular soldier, served under Murat and participated in a number of campaigns. On 29th April, 1810, he was transferred to the Royal Corps of Artillery, where he rose to the rank of aiutante (a highest grade of non-commissioned officer). In 1815, the year Napoleon abdicated, Avitabile was lucky to be commissioned as a lieutenant in the 15th Company of Artillery. After the fall of Napoleon, Naples became free and the Bourbons re-appeared; Avitabile transferred his allegiance to them and was allowed to retain his commission. Here,

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1. Agerola or Airola means airiness. The gentlemen of this place were known for black-mailing and had the reputation of lawlessness.

under the Austrian General Delaver, Avitabile took part in the siege of Gaeta, where he distinguished himself and was also wounded. For his services he was recommended for promotion to Captaincy and also for the award of a decoration. But, for his having previously served with Murat, he was not considered for either. Disgusted with this treatment, Avitabile, in January 1817, resigned from the service and went abroad. He roamed in Algiers, Carthage, Rhone and by chance met one of his ex-colleagues who had just returned from Persia. The latter's 'dazzling description' of Persia worked so effectively on the young mind that he (Avitabile) decided to go eastwards in search of a career as well as a fortune. He reached Persia in 1820 and joined the Shah's service. There, he served for about six years and was promoted to the rank of a Colonel. For his services he was granted by the Shah the title of *khan* and was also awarded the decorations of the Two Lions and Crown and of the Lion and Sun. But, in this service also he received no satisfaction; he left the service and returned to Europe. At this time he heard from his friend Ventura who had joined the service of Ranjit Singh, the King of the Panjab. He had written to Avitabile about the favourable employment "under the ruler of a new and vigorous race whose service seemed to open up vistas of almost limitless ambition." Once again Avitabile proceeded eastward, this time his destination being the Panjab. In Persia he was joined by Court, and both travelling through Afghanistan arrived at Lahore in 1827 when Ranjit Singh was at the zenith of his career.

The success of Allard and Ventura made Avitabile's entry easy. The usual preliminaries normally carried out before employing a foreigner completed, Avitabile was taken into the service of Lahore Darbar.

Avitabile, like Court, was a gunner, and also expert in the art of gun-making. So he was, to start with, employed in the artillery and was also charged with the supervision of arsenal and foundaries of the Maharaja.

As compared to other European officers in the service of Ranjit Singh, Avitabile's operation record is meagre. He participated in a few campaigns only. In 1834, he was despatched to confiscate the estates of the Jasrota chief and others near and around him. The one important campaign in which he took part was the one launched against Dost Muhammad. In 1835, Dost Muhammad Khan of Kabul had raised a cry of Jihad against the Sikhs, collected a large army with the

intention of occupying Peshawar and had advanced towards the city. On the other hand, Ranjit Singh had also advanced with a large force. The "Francese Compo" or the French Division of the Sikh army, about 20,000 to 22,000 strong, formed part of this force, and its various elements were commanded by Ventura, Allard, Avitabile and Court. This force was ordered to march towards Hashtnagar in order to take the enemy from its left flank, and the Maharaja, with the main portion of his force threatened the enemy's centre and his right flank. By these clever tactics, the Maharaja made the Dost's position untenable, and the latter fled without giving fight.

In 1835, he was appointed one of the controllers of Peshawar. He, alongwith Court, was made responsible for the military affairs of the area. While at Peshawar, he had prepared a map of the fort of the Isafzai, he also suggested occupation of the Isafzai area, which had an income of Rs. 5,00,000. In 1836, he fell ill and had to come back to Lahore for treatment.

In 1837, he was again sent to Peshawar, this time as an administrator. Here, he had the road between Peshawar and Attock improved. In June 1838, he was directed to find out a good road to Jalalabad as the Maharaja, after his latest interview with the British Governor General, had firmly decided to capture it.<sup>2</sup>

During this period, Allard was also stationed at Peshawar, in charge of the military affairs. At one time, some differences of opinion took place between Allard and Avitabile. Avitabile didn't like anybody's interference in "matters regarding the administration of the country, prosperity and contentment of the people and the army..." Allard thought that "one who was concerned with the financial affairs could not properly understand the administration and control of the army."<sup>3</sup> Realising that the dispute, if escalated, would come to the notice of the Maharaja and would not be good for either of them, they wisely patched up their differences.

Normally, the Europeans in the service of Ranjit Singh were employed in the organisation and training of his army. Avitabile, one of the most remarkable European officers employed by Ranjit Singh, was an exception; his talents for civil administration were soon discovered by the Maharaja's judicious mind, and, to start with, he was given the civil and military charge of Wazirabad and many

2. Sohan Lal, *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh*, Daftar III, Part IV, p. 531.



adjoining taluqas. About his administration of Wazirabad, Dr. Wolff, a traveller who visited the General at Wazirabad in 1831, observed that he had most remarkably improved the town, had kept the streets of the city clean, and had got a beautiful carriage made for himself, and a fine palace.<sup>4</sup> "This ingenious man," the traveller states further, "has made this the finest town in the Panjāb, and added to it a new town with a gate, to which he has given the name of "Ram Katera," the quarter of God. He has established gallows, which he calls the ornament of civilization, for he has the power of life and death, but he is devoted to his Royal Master, and to the welfare of the country; the people of his province love him as a father."<sup>5</sup> He told Wolff at once that he would show to him his *angeli custodi*, and then took him to his bedroom, the walls of which were covered with pictures of *kunchnees*—dancing girls. He and Wolff one day rode out together on elephants and he said to the latter: "Now, I shall show you marks of civilisation which I have introduced into this country." They rode outside of the town, and there Wolff saw before him about six gibbets, upon which a great number of malefactors were hanging.<sup>6</sup>

In 1837, on the death of Sardar Nalwa, Avitabile was appointed the Governor of Peshawar where he stayed till after the death of the Maharaja. Here, in dealing with the Pathans, he had not only followed the methods of Hari Singh but had "improved upon them with his own barbarous and savage measures." He would inflict inhuman tortures in order to enforce law and order. Here is an instance of such methods, narrated in a letter dated 26th March, 1814, by the British Political Assistant at Peshawar: "In cases of murder, a thirst for private vengeance is encouraged, contrary to the spirit of the law, by the relations of the deceased being permitted to kill the guilty person. One revolting instance of it took place a short time back. A man assassinated another. To obtain the price of blood, Avitabile kept him in prison for some time, and then exposed him stark naked to the scorching heat of the sun and to the attacks of the insects, etc., with half of his body painted red. As he continued obstinate, the mother of the slain was permitted to use her right of slaughtering him with a knife, which she not only did, but in her

3. Umdat-ut-Tawarikh, Daftar, III, Part V, p. 19.

4. Dr Wolff, Travels and Adventures, Vol. II, p. 66.

5. Wolff, Labours, Researches and Missionary (2nd Edition), p. 260.

6. Dr. Wolff, Travels and Adventures, Vol. II, p. 66.

delirious and savage joy, stooped down and drank two handfuls of his blood, as it welled from the death wound."

Although the conditions and the turbulent behaviour of the tribes in the frontier region demanded severe actions, but he exceeded all limits. Sir Henry Lawrence narrates the cruel methods adopted by Avitabile in suppressing the unruly inhabitants of Peshawar, "a fragment of Central Asia that has accidentally become, geographically and politically, part of India." In his opinion "the most lenient view of him that can be taken is, to consider him as set in authority over savage animals—not as a ruler over reasonable beings—as one appointed to grind down a race, who bear the yoke with about as good a grace as 'a wild bull in a net,' and who, catching the ruler for one moment asleep, would soon cease to be governed. But the ground of complaint alleged against him is that he acts as a savage among savage men, instead of showing them that a Christian can wield the iron sceptre without staining it by needless cruelty—without following some of the worst fashions of his worst neighbours. Under his rule summary hangings have been added to the native catalogue of punishments, and not a bad one either, when properly used; but the ostentation of adding two or three to the string suspended from the gibbet, on special days and festivals added to a very evident habitual carelessness of life, lead one to fear that small pains are taken to distinguish between innocence and guilt, and that many a man, ignorant of the alleged crime, pays for it with his blood...

"Still, General Avitabile has many of the attributes of a good ruler: he is bold, active and intelligent, seeing everything with his own eyes; up early and late. He has, at the expense of his own character for humanity, by the terror of his name, saved much life. It is but just to state that the peaceful and well-disposed inhabitants of Peshawar, both Hindu and Muhammedan, united in praise of his administration, though all with one voice declared that mercy seldom mingled in his decrees. Believed to fear neither man nor devil, Avitabile keeps down by grim fear, what nothing else would keep down, the unruly spirits around him, who, if let slip, would riot in carnage: his severity may therefore be extenuated as the least of two evils.<sup>7</sup>

The provincial governors were given discretionary powers in the maintenance of discipline and law and order. Peshawar being more

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7. Pearse, *Memoirs of Alexander Gardner*, pp. 319-320.

unruly area, General Avitabile, the iron-handed governor of this province, was given exceptionally wide powers of discretion which he used without remorse. In the frontier, he was known as Abue-Tabela. As an administrator, "for every crime, a Head" was his motto. It is said that for rape, one sepoy was thrown from the rock and another was stoned to death. He would brick up those who failed to pay their tribute. There was but one exception in that he would abjure rather save the life of beautiful women. This Italian's savage treatment of the locals, though appreciated by many Europeans,<sup>8</sup> can undoubtedly be attributed to the fact that he was not dealing with his own countrymen. He was a foreigner.

The type of punishment—the hanging of malefactors on gibbets—practised by Avitabile at Wazirabad as described by Dr. Wolff, was later witnessed by Barr at Peshawar when he visited this city in April 1839. Justifying such methods, Barr says, "...but disgusting as these are, it is to be feared that without them there would be no safety, neither for life nor property."<sup>9</sup>

It is understood, according to Mackenzie, that the General had kept a box to receive petitions from the public which otherwise could have been stopped if sent through officials. The keys of this box he kept with himself.

On retirement, Avitabile used to narrate to his countrymen stories of his service in the Panjab, with particular reference to his governorship of Peshawar. One day he told the following story to a person who had built his palace in his native land:-

"When I first marched into Peshawar," said the General, "I sent on in advance a number of wooden posts, which my men put up round the walls of the city. The people scoffed aloud at this new madness of the Feringhee, and louder still, when my men came in again laying coils of rope at the feet of the posts. Guns and swords, it was whispered, are the arms to rule a city, not sticks and tackle. However, when my installation was complete, there were found one fine morning dangling from these crosstrees, fifty of the worst characters in Peshawar; and the exhibition was repeated on every market day with new subjects, will I had made short work of brigands and

8. "The General, though in private life the mildest of men, rules the Peshawarees with a rod of iron, the only mode of governing a people so unprincipled as the Afghans" (Havelock, *War in Afghanistan*).

9. Barr, *Journal*, pp. 286-287.

murderers. Then I had to deal with the liars and talebearers. My method with them was to cut out their tongues. And then a surgeon appeared and professed to be able to restore them to speech. I sent for this surgeon and had his tongue cut out also. After this there was peace: and in six months *ecco* ! crime became unknown in Peshawar."<sup>10</sup>

As at Wazirabad, he carried out many improvements in the city of Peshawar also. He got a high mud-wall constructed around the city. A former *serae* was converted into "a lofty and magnificent dwelling-house" known as *Gora Katra*. The latter commanded a nice view of the city. His European guests were placed in the suburbs of this building. He also got the Bala Hissar fort of Peshawar repaired.<sup>11</sup> Barr also was impressed with the magnificence of the General's house at Peshawar. He writes: "The house in which the Governor entertained us, forms the centre of one of the sides of an old but spacious caravanserai, the walls of which he has repaired and converted into lines of defence, but for musketry and cannon, and as there are godowns and storehouses in its interior, where he can lodge ammunition and provisions, the place is easily converted into a fortified situation, capable of containing a large garrison, and of affording strenuous resistance in case of a siege. In choosing a place of residence among the undisciplined population committed to his government, Avitabile was doubtless swayed by these considerations, and should the Afghans at any future period endeavour to cast off the yoke of their conquerors, he would, if such were necessary, easily be enabled to hold this position until succour arrived from the Panjab."<sup>12</sup>

One cannot say as to how the foreign officers employed by Ranjit Singh would have behaved during the Anglo-Sikh Wars as some of these had died and of the remainder nearly all had left the Lahore service before these Wars took place. As regards Avitabile, his behaviour during the First Anglo-Afghan War "does not encourage an optimistic view," although when Ranjit Singh was alive, he showed

10. J.J. Cotton, Avitabile, (Calcutta Review, October, 1906).

11. Shahamat Ali, The Sikhs and Afghans, pp. 258-259. "It is by far the strongest fort I have seen in the country, and quite impregnable, except to a very heavy battering train and regular approaches. It is built on a scarped artificial mound, with double wall, flanking town, and *fause bras*." Havelock, War in Afghanistan in 1838-39, Vol. II, p. 217.

12. Barr, Journal, pp. 250-251.

his loyalty and humility to the Maharaja like a dog.<sup>13</sup> He was favourably disposed towards the British. For example, in 1839, during the process of re-installing Shah Shuja on the Kabul throne, the one column under Wade was to advance via Peshawar and Jalababad. When this column reached Peshawar in April, Avitabile, on a request from Wade raised and provided the latter with a battalion of Musalmans known as Aligol—called Ram Ghaul by Sikhs. This action he took in the absence of any instructions from the Maharaja.<sup>14</sup> He even showed the fort of Peshawar to all the Company's officers.

Again in 1841, he acted in a similar manner. An insurrection had taken place in Kabul, which forms a painful story, and to subdue it the British rushed their army through the Panjab and the Khaibar Pass. The British, though distrustful of the Sikhs, asked for their help. Avitabile, who was still the Governor of Peshawar, and in the absence of any orders, "freely gave what aid he could; some pieces of artillery were furnished as well as abundance of ordinary supplies, and the British detachment effected the relief of Ali Masjid."<sup>15</sup> Sir Henry Lawrence had rightly found a useful person in Avitabile; he once remarked that "we need such men as the Raja and General Avitabile, and should bid them to us by the only tie they recognise—self-interest."

The coming of East India Company's armies in the Panjab gave Avitabile good chance to send money out of the Panjab. He was always ready to advance large sums of money to the British Field Treasure "in exchange for bills on Fort William," and, thus, before the campaign was closed he had exchanged no less than ten lakhs of rupees in this convenient manner, and was also able to transmit this fortune to England.<sup>16</sup> Also, through Colonel Wade, the Company's

13. Umdat-ut-Tawarikh, Daftar, III, Part IV, p. 466.

14. Shahamat Ali, *The Sikhs and Afghans*, p. 249.

15. Cunningham, *History of the Sikhs*, p. 223.

16. J. J. Cotton, Avitabile; Pearse, *Memoirs of Alexander Gardner*, p. 324; "Notwithstanding his hospitality and magnificence he is said to have amassed the sum of eight lakhs of rupees which he has vested in British Securities." Havelock (*War in Afghanistan in 1828-38*, Vol. II, p. 197) Dr. Wolff writes: "When the English (in the years 1838 and 1839) marched into Afghanistan, Avitabile furnished them with all the provisions required in War, for which they gave him bills on England; and thus he got all his money out of the country, and placed it in the Bank of England. And, besides this, he induced Sher Singh, ... who succeeded to the throne of his father after the murder of

*[Continued on page 269]*

Political Agent at Ludhiana, Avitabile regularly remitted his *Nanak-shahi* rupees to be kept in the British Treasury. The other intermediary for these transactions was the banking house of John Palmer in Calcutta. After the War in Afghanistan, he, on request, was permitted by the Directors to get his account transferred to London (with Leadenhall Street).

The above services rendered by Avitabile were, on his retirement, appreciated by the East India Company whose Court of Directors resolved on 27th August, 1845, "that the eminent services of General Avitabile, while governor of Peshawar, in co-operation with the British troops during the Afghanistan campaign, fully entitled him to some ensuring testimonial of the Court's grateful sense of his conduct," and presented the General a sword worth 300 guineas.

In hospitality, he was very discriminating between the Indians and the Europeans. His hospitality to the Europeans who visited him was well known. On the return journey from Kabul, on termination of the Afghan War, the British force encamped near Peshawar. Avitabile "gave a series of sumptuous entertainments" to the British officers of this force," "followed on particular occasions by grand display of fireworks and nautches..."<sup>17</sup> With the British, especially, he was very friendly. General Willoughby Cotton's and Kean's "home address are still to be found recorded on the margins of his letter book."<sup>18</sup> Expressing universal feelings, Brigadier Wild once wrote that "The name of Avitabile has become synonym for munificent hospitality throughout the British provinces in Hindustan." As an appreciation for this hospitality, the British army officers subscribed to present Avitabile, when he visited London after retirement, with a plate.

During his service under Ranjit Singh, Avitabile had collected a huge fortune of about £ 50,000 by fair, foul, rough and arbitrary

*Continued from page 268]*

Kharak Singh, to advance £ 5,00,000, and place it in his hands, of which sum Avitabile promised to give him account. But all the money advanced by Sher Singh was placed in the Bank of England, in Avitabile's name. Sher Singh was murdered by Dhian Singh, his prime minister, and Dhian Singh was killed by the people. Then Avitabile left the Panjab, came to England, took possession of the whole property, went to Naples, married his own niece, with a dispensation from the Pope; built a beautiful country house near Naples, and there died after some years" (Dr. Wolff, *Travels and Adventures*, Vol. II, p. 67).

17. Havelock, *War in Afghanistan in 1838-39*, Vol. II, p. 196.

methods. He was paid at the handsome rate of Rs. 2,500-00 per month. In addition, he had been awarded a jagir with a yearly income of Rs. 20,000.

Since he had come such a long way in the search of money, the methods adopted for collecting it did not matter to him. He would adopt any method so long as it brought him money. The British Political Assistant at Peshawar, gives one such nefarious way of collecting money. One day he was riding with the General, when suddenly an old woman approached the General, crying that her two sons had been murdered, and that she should be permitted to kill the murderers. Since he had no hope of extracting any money from the offenders, he allowed the woman to fulfil her wish. He even invited the Political Assistant to witness the execution.

There were reported many cases of high-handedness on his part. Once he had collected some money from the Khattris of Peshawar and also demolished their houses. When the Maharaja came to know about it, he was furious, ordered Avitabile to have their houses rebuilt and also return the money exacted from them unduly, and report completion.<sup>19</sup> At another occasion, the Maharaja had to remark "that though Avitabile was a big Kardar, yet he squeezed life out of the zamindars at the time of making collections of large sums from them..." Whereas there was no complaint ever made against Diwan Sawan Mal, an honest man. Also, the latter's revenues reached the Lahore exchequer regularly every month.<sup>20</sup>

Ranjit Singh had also the information that Avitabile "was embezzling the revenues of Peshawar to a great extent."<sup>21</sup> According to all calculations the income of Peshawar was estimated to be Rs. 5,00,000 whereas the General was remitting only a portion of it. Earlier, when he was the Kardar of Wazirabad, he had acted in a similar manner; and the Maharaja had to admonish him through a letter (1st July 1831) saying "that it was a great wonder that Sahib with so much wisdom and intelligence had taken so much time

18. J. J. Cotton, Avitabile. The General's considerable number of letters and papers were transcribed for J. J. Cotton, author of the General's biography, by Avitabile's two nephews, M.M. Onofrio and Paolo Avitabile.

19. Umdat-ut-Tawarikh, Daftar III, Part V, p. 116.

20. *Ibid.*, Part II, p. 268.

21. *Ibid.*, Part IV, 543.

regarding the collection of large sums of money, remarking further that it quite became his sense of vigilance and watchfulness that he should realise Rs. 2,60,000 in the shortest possible time and make the same reach the Maharaja at once."<sup>22</sup>

All this wealth enabled him to live in "voluptuous splendour." Captain (afterwards Sir Henry) Havelock, who had stayed with him at Peshawar, describes his way of living in these words: "The Governor is a man of princely habits. His dress, charges, and equipages, all partake of a splendour well calculated to uphold, by giving an *eclat* to his authority amongst a people like the Afghans. He particularly, and very justly, piques himself on the excellence of his table, and keeps an establishment of not fewer than eight cooks, who are well versed in all the mysteries of Persian, English, and French gastronomy."<sup>23</sup>

According to Osborne, none of the European officers seemed "very fond of his (Ranjit Singh's) service,...for they are both badly and irregularly paid, and are treated with little respect or confidence."<sup>24</sup> One cannot agree with these remarks. Otherwise how could they have accumulated such huge fortunes, and also travelled so far to the Maharaja's service in such numbers ?

In spite of the riches collected in the Panjab, this soldier of fortune had never forgotten that he was a Neapolitan; he was always anxious to return to his native country. Once he said to Wolff: "Per a more di Dio, fatemi partire da questo paese." That is, "for the love of God, help me to get away from this country."<sup>25</sup>

In 1834, when Allard sailed for his country, Avitabile assured him that he would also be leaving for Europe as soon as he could do without offending "le brave" Ranjit Singh which he would not during the life time of the Maharaja. "My viceroyalty," he further said "has not made me lose hope of seeing once more *la bella Europa* and mountains of Agerola. Not even were His Majesty to nominate me his successor would my ideas change a single hair. I long for the happy day which will set me free like yourself, Alla Kerimast." He always kept himself in touch with his people at Agerola. His "heart

22. Umdat-ut-Tawarikh, Daftar III, Part I, p. 56.

23. Capt Henry Havelock, Narrative of the War in Afghanistan in 1838-39, Vol. II, pp. 196-197.

24. Osborne, The Court and Camp of Ranjit Singh, pp. 56-57.

25. Dr. Wolff, Travels and Adventures, p. 66.



beat over little else except home and money."

He was very fond of collecting weapons including valuable sabres. Some of these he showed to Barr when he visited Avitabile while passing through Peshawar, on his way to Kabul. Barr writes : " the General showed us several long matchlocks, and Jhezails, or rifles, which he had just had made up, some of these being seven feet long, and so heavy that it was as much as any of us could do to lift them horizontally; and they can only be manageable with forks (like the khybarries use) to support them, or as wall pieces, where they would become formidable weapons, as they send a ball to a considerable distance."

Avitabile had served in the armies of Naples, France, Persia and the Panjab, and was a well decorated soldier. He possessed a number of honours awarded by the rulers of the various countries he had served under. He was a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour, of the Orders of Merit and of St. Ferdinand (of the Kingdom of the two Sicilies). He was a Commander of the Durrani Order (of Afghanistan), Grand Commander of the Lion and Sun and of the Two Lions and Crown (of Persia). He had received the Auspicious Star of the Panjab. He was also awarded the titles of Dilawar Jang Bahadur, Amant Panah, Kerka Ba Safa and Amin-ul-daula.

After the death of Ranjit Singh, the army gradually went out of control. The army became the 'king-makers.' A spirit of violence had permeated into the army and, by 1841, it had spread to the outer provinces of Kashmir and Peshawar. At the latter place Avitabile was very hard pressed; the situation became serious and he thought of leaving his post and seek safety at Jalalabad. The conditions further deteriorated; it was no more conducive to honourable service, and life, also, was not safe. It had become really difficult to maintain discipline and control over the army at Peshawar. The General became impatient and wanted to be relieved of his post at Peshawar. In April 1843 he was instructed to hand over his command to Tej Singh, "the greatest poltroon in the Sikh army," and to report at Lahore. In August, he took a month's leave to visit Simla. It was here that he heard of the great tragedy, i.e., the assassination of Maharaja Sher Singh and his son Kanwar Partap Singh. He submitted his resignation while at Simla. From Simla he went to Calcutta where he was received as a dignitary. He sailed from Calcutta on 15th December and landed at Naples on 18th February, 1844.

At home he was confirmed as a General, made a Knight of San Ferdinandoedel Merito. King 'Bomba' gave him a gift of gold snuff-box set with his cipher in diamonds. He, in turn, presented to the King, Kashmir Shawls, Persian carpets, Arab horses, and surprisingly two Muhammedan boys.

Then he visited Marseilles and met Court; thence he went to Paris where his reception was gratifying. Louis Phillipe presented Avitabile with two Sevre Vases inscribed "Louis Phillippe King of the French to General Avitabile."

From there he went to London, where the people took great interest in him, and he met many men of position. On 20th June, 1844, he had an interview with the Duke of Wellington—what transpired between the two, however, is not known. In August 1844 he returned to Naples.

At Naples, Avitabile was married to Michela, the daughter of his elder brother. This marriage took place against the wishes of the girl who was already in love with some other young man; the love-affair non-the-less carried on even after the marriage. Avitabile suspected it and it is believed would have killed both the lovers if caught at their 'tricks.' But he could not succeed in this. The idea behind this marriage was to keep all his property and riches within the family. Since the relatives were interested in his riches they all prayed for his early death so that they could divide the huge fortune. A mystery is attached to his death which took place on 28th March, 1850. The greater evidence there is to the fact that he was poisoned by his young wife; but the news given out were that the General had died a natural death—some said of "apoplexy." After his death there were so many claimants of his property that 'Avitabile's cousions' became a by-word and a laughing-stock in Italy. Most of his fortune soon found its way into the lawyers' pocекts, and "Thus for the hundreth time did the pen profit by that which the sword had earned."

Avitabile was a tall stout man, six feet (1.80 metres) or more in height, with an oval face and broad shoulders. He had brown eyes of extraordinary brilliance. He had a large, crooked and 'immoderately stout' nose, and red and heavy lips, 'something of the Jewish type.' Barr described him as a 'masculine individual.' He was neither handsome nor ugly; his complexion was dark and the face marked with small-pox signs. He had a stern, haughty looking and sensual cast of countenance. He possessed grizzled moustaches, and

his beard of grey colour, reaching half way down his chest.

Avitabile was a frank, gay and a good-humoured person. He was clever, cheerful and full of fun. But, whenever an important subject was to be discussed he would become very serious. "He is cheerful," writes Wolff, "like an Italian; but when he is occupied in business he is as serious as an Englishman."<sup>26</sup> Macnaughten found him a clever, wise and a brave person.

He was a firm man who feared neither man nor devil. And from the determined cast of his countenance, writes Barr, "you can see at once he never issues an order without its being promptly obeyed, or woe to the man who neglects it."<sup>27</sup> His voice was "resonant and rough, and in every way commanding." Often he adopted queer methods of dealing with odd situations. It is said that once his own guards rebelled against him. To deal with them, he opened the gates of prisons and let loose the inmates who, most sturdy, surprised the guards.

He was courtly in demeanour; he dressed himself neatly and magnificently. Neapolitans' love for profusion, glitter and glamour explains the General's lordly way of living and surrounding himself with pomp, dazzle and display. Barr, who saw Avitabile at Peshawar during March 1839, was impressed by the General's dress. He writes :

"He dresses very magnificently. On the present occasion, his costume consisted of a long green coat, fashioned not unlike a Mussalman's 'chupkun,' and ornamented with a profusion of lace and three rows of oblong buttons of solid gold; trousers of scarlet cloth, with a broad gold stripe down the seams, and a green velvet cap, with a band also of gold lace and a tassel of the same material, but no peak. This he invariably retains on his head, whether indoors or not (having adopted the native custom of remaining at all times covered), and out of compliments to them we did the same, although, I must confess, I could gladly have dispensed with the weight of my helmet."<sup>28</sup> Further, he writes : "Both had handsome sabres attached to embroidered belts, the plate of Avitabile's being of gold studded with valuable jewels, as was also his scabbard, a very small portion of green velvet being visible in the centre of it. The blade of his

26. Researches and Missionary Labours (2nd Edition), p. 260.

27. Journal, p. 231.

28. *Ibid.*, p.p. 231-232.

scimitar, which belonged to Akbar, is a very superb one, and cost the governor 2,000 rupees, which added to 1,000 more for the setting, may be considered a tolerably large sum for a weapon."<sup>29</sup>

Avitabile was a capable and a skilful administrator. His Royal Master, the Maharaja, considered Avitabile 'indeed a unique person in the settlement of the affairs of the country; the people were grateful to him and that the country had certainly prospered under him.'<sup>30</sup> He was known for his efficient administration even outside of the Panjab. Captain Havelock mentions the fact in his book. He writes that "His reputation as an excellent governor had been fully established in the Panjab, and had even reached India, whilst he was in charge of the town and surrounding country of Wazirabad."<sup>31</sup> Although a Christian, he, in pursuance of the Lahore policy, did not allow beef eating in the valley of Peshawar.

He liked the Sikhs. Once he told Colin Mackenzie, an Assistant to Major Mackeson, that he preferred the Sikhs, *perche sono troppo semplici*, "because they were so simple minded... and have no religious prejudices against Europeans as the Persians and Afghans have."

Avitabile was a linguist : he could speak Italian, French, Persian and Panjabi with equal facility.

From the very childhood he was rough, hard, brutal, obstinate and indefatigable. Polish and manners he had acquired only skin-deep. Lately, he had developed a nervous disorder, which Dr. Honigberger, who had lived with Avitabile for about three years, ascribes to his immoderate indulgence in champagne. In his opinion "The pleasure which he took in seeing people hung up by the dozen" must be attributed to the General's mental affection.

He was a firm believer of : "Persevere to the summit and the prospect will more than reward you." He never forgot it, he persevered and was indeed rewarded for his efforts. He used to say : Alla Kari-mast, i.e. God is beneficent.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 232.

30. Umdat-ut-Tawarikh, Daftar III, Part III, p. 312.

31. War in Afghanistan in 1838-39, Vol. II, p. 195.

## How To Rule India : Two Documents On The I.C.S. and The Politics of Administration

N. GERALD BARRIER

Maintaining the British *raj* in India required the government to come to terms with the changing social and political milieu in which it had to operate. Without sensitivity to events around them, civil servants stood in danger of being trapped by subordinate opinion and faulty intelligence, which could lead in turn to serious mistakes. The task of finding out what was happening, of being aware and responsive to changes and attitudes, remained a formidable one. Two little-known documents particularly illustrate this process. The first, a memorandum written by John Malcolm in 1821, contains instructions to his staff in the Delhi residency on proper modes of intercourse between European officials and Indians. The second consists of a detailed commentary on social and political relations between I.C.S. officers and Punjabis, written in 1922 to acquaint young administrators with the "broad rules and principles" of contact between rulers and ruled.\*

The documents, particularly the recent Punjab version, afford insight into the nature of British administration. First, a considerable amount of the self-image of the civil service had been perpetuated between 1821 and 1922. The same themes keep appearing in the instructions: the key roles of *izzat*, 'face,' and influence in successful rule, the notion of the *raj* as both paternal and "personal" government, and the need for patience when dealing with a subject, "native" people. At the same time, however, a century of experience had helped alter old themes. Early assumptions about being a ruling race had become clouded with ambivalence. Respect for indigenous institutions had been amended to include attention to use of words and symbols, and gestures such as offering chairs to the emergent western educated elite.

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\* Both documents were printed by the Punjab Government and circulated confidentially to officers "for official use only." Grants from the American Institute of Indian Studies and the Research Council, University of Missouri, made possible location and editing of the Memoranda.

By 1922 the British were more aware, or at least more verbal, about how to gather information and remain at the top of the political system. Former reliance on contact with the people through tours and relaxed horseback rides had given way to a search for a routinized method of communication with Punjabis. Time must be set aside for interviews and special conversations. These periods of contact were not intended only to placate the feelings of those desiring redress or the honour resulting from personal contact with the *hazur*, the officer, they had come to be viewed as a necessary method for cultivating political support and acquiring information. To survive as the accepted ruler meant also to understand and manipulate a variety of interests. The 1922 memorandum carefully differentiates Punjabis into various classes—chiefs, peasants, urban or educated, soldiers, employees—with appropriate treatment allotted to each grouping. Reiterating the significance of different classes was not a new feature, as were not the use of durbars and patronage as means of political control, but the wording and organization of the memorandum reflects a sense of urgency in keeping with the rapid politicalization of the Punjab.

Such themes, and many others in the following documents, underline the administrative pattern often lost in constitutional studies or the reminiscences of district officers. The British were not free agents, but a cog in a complex set of relationships stretching from the village through the legislative council. Balancing detached judgement and decision-making with responsiveness to changes and feelings among Indians remained the dual and sometimes conflicting task of government. To fail in either function could mean a breakdown of administration.

### **Memorandum on the Subject of Social and Official Intercourse between European Officers in the Punjab and Indians**

1. The object of the Memorandum is to give hints to members of the Indian Civil Service and other branches of the Civil administration in the Punjab, when they first come out to join their appointments, as to the broad rules and principles which govern social and official intercourse with Indians of all classes.

Every such officer should carefully study Sir J. Malcom's Minute

which is appended to this Memorandum. This was written nearly a century ago and was addressed to officers in quite another part of India, but all the principles and much of the advice set forth in it, are applicable to the Punjab at the present day.

2. It is essential that an officer in civil employment should be able to converse freely in their own language with the classes of Indians with whom he comes into contact, as this will add greatly to the interest of his life in India, to his efficiency as a servant of Govt. and to the confidence with which he is regarded by the people, especially those of the peasant class, who form the bulk of the population of the province. Next to a knowledge of the language, tact and sympathy are the most important qualifications for a successful career in India.

A sympathetic officer, who will listen to and can himself understand the people's representations and takes a kindly interest in their welfare, will soon acquire an influence that can never be acquired by an officer who, though more capable, either cannot understand the people or will not extend his sympathy to them.

When touring it is a good plan to hold informal conferences at halting places and to listen to any verbal requests the people may have to make. They are much less prone to exaggerate their complaints and much more likely to adhere to the truth, when they are speaking in the presence of a large concourse of their neighbours, than when, tutored by a petition-writer, they appear in a Court or office at the headquarters of the District or Sub-Division.

As a rule the truth regarding any matter of local interest can be very easily ascertained in such an assembly.

The people thoroughly appreciate these "Darbars," as they call them, as it gives them an opportunity of personal communication with the officer.

At such Darbars an officer, who has acquired the confidence of the people, will often be able to effect an amicable settlement, through local headmen, of disputes which would otherwise have gone to the Courts and caused the ruin of one, if not both, of the parties.

It must be borne in mind that there are many matters which the generality of Indians do not view from the same standpoint as Europeans. Their social laws and their code of morals differ in many respects from those in vogue in the British Isles.

An officer must of course administer the laws as they stand, and

he should not allow local customs and local ideals to cause him to deviate in the slightest degree from the high standard of justice which is the mainstay of British rule in India. At the same time, he should acquaint himself with the customs of the people, in order that he may be able to judge their actions reasonably and interpret their motives intelligently.

A harsh overbearing manner is fatal to the successful management of affairs in an Indian district. If an officer is sympathetic and reasonably patient the people, as a rule, will accept his decision with satisfaction and carry out his orders cheerfully.

3. Special care is required in all relations that young civilians may have with Indian Chiefs. A Chief should be treated with deference, and care should be taken on all occasions when a Chief calls upon an officer he should not be kept waiting or otherwise inconvenienced but should be treated as a gentleman of good family with a claim to deference and special courtesy. A chief will usually not call without sending previous intimation, and a young officer may well look up the history of the Chief's family in Lepel Griffin's "Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab" in the interval before receiving the Chief. Officers paying a private visit to a Native State should at once ascertain at what time it will be convenient for them to call on the Ruling Chief. When driving with a Ruling Chief care should be taken to place him on the right.

4. Special care is also required in dealing with educated Indians. An easy and friendly attitude should be cultivated and any appearance of hauteur should be specially shunned. Good humour is almost indispensable. The respect which an Englishman can always win in India is not to be attained by "coming it" over an Indian or presuming on the fact that one is a member of the ruling race. The days when this mental attitude was acquiesced in by Indians have passed and a Government servant will do the best for Imperial interests if he establishes a claim for affection in the hearts of his Indian friends. It must not be forgotten that Indians are at once emotional and sensitive. Ordinarily speaking the educated Indian, or the Indian of good family, has extraordinarily good manners. It will not be amiss therefore to even exaggerate the habit of courtesy in dealing with Indians. Englishmen are frequently rough, ready and offhand with each other. Most Indians will not appreciate such a demeanor, though doubtless when a personal friendship between an Indian and Englishmen has



ripened, any excessive degree of courtesy may be relaxed.

5. In many districts there are pensioned soldiers in almost every village.

These form a loyal and deserving class and should be treated with kindness. An old soldier, whether an officer, or a sēpoy or reservist, has always been accustomed to have specially free access to British officers and is genuinely glad to see a "Sahib" again. A few questions about his regiment and his service, or an inspection of his medals will gladden the old man's heart.

It is generally advisable to cultivate their acquaintance. Frequently they can give trustworthy information and sometimes valuable assistance in the administration.

Some subordinate civil officials try to prevent civil officers making friends with old soldiers. This is probably merely due to jealousy, and any tendency in this direction should be watched and checked. Special care should be taken to treat Indian commissioned officers with proper respect, that is, Rissaldar-Majors, Subedar-Majors, Subedars, Resaidars and Jemadars.

Any Native commissioned officer, whether on leave or pensioned, should always be given an interview if he desires it. In his regiment, he is a person of consequence, trusted and confided in by his British officers, so he can reasonably expect a civil officer of the district in which his home is situated, by sparing a few minutes of his time, to mark his appreciation of his services to Government.

A native officer, or cavalry man of any rank, who is in uniform and wearing a sword will present the hilt of it. This should be touched with the right hand, as an acceptance of the devotion of the wearer of the sword to the Government whose servant he is.

6. In India, as elsewhere, repeated loss of temper involves loss of respect. In all dealings with Indians it is a golden rule never to give way to temper. An officer who, when necessary, is quietly and determinedly severe is far more feared and respected than the most violent blusterer, and an officer who cannot control himself acquires very quickly an unenviable reputation, loses the confidence and respect of the people, and thus reduces his own efficiency as a servant of the Government.

7. In Urdu the word "Ap" should be used when conversing with Indian gentlemen or officials of any standing.

The 2nd person plural should be used to ordinary zimindars and

petty officials while the 2nd person singular should, if used at all, be reserved for menial servants.

The provincial dialects, however do not lend themselves to such politeness and the 2nd person plural, or even sometimes the 2nd person singular, is generally used in ordinary conversation.

In English conversation the application to Indians of the term "Native" is now frequently resented and should be avoided.

8. It is one of the most important duties of all Government officers and particularly of District Officers to be freely accessible to all who desire to see them either on business or, as it is generally phrased, for the purpose of 'paying their respects.' However efficient an officer may be on paper or in his Court, he is a failure if he is not personally known to the people of his district or division. All oriental peoples have a strong predilection for personal Government, and are much more amenable to order and control when they recognise the personal source of such control than when it appears to them in the light of a mere mechanical emanation not from a man but from an office. Also there is nothing which the Indian appreciates more than the privilege of personal access to his ruler and the opportunity of representing at length and orally his grievance or his point of view. Even when it is a foregone conclusion that the reply of a representation must be in the negative, it is a mistake on that account to decline to listen to argument within reasonable limits or to terminate curtly a discussion. A refusal or an unpalatable order is accepted with much greater resignation when the officer, who has to give it, has listened to all that is to be said on the other side. It is well, therefore, even at the cost of some waste of time, to allow visitors or petitioners or deputations to talk till they have said all that they can say. Villagers in a crowd will generally try to talk all at once, but they have no objection to being told to select a spokesman, and this should be done. Moreover, when the spokesman has had his say, it is well further to invite individual elders to say what they want to.

9. When it is necessary to find fault with an Indian of a responsible position, either an official or a non-official, the rebuke should be delivered in private, unless the offence is so heinous that a public disgrace is considered necessary.

It must be remembered that the influence and consequently the utility of a responsible official or local magnate, who has been so disgraced, is materially lessened. The bystanders will certainly publish

it far and wide.

The maintenance of the influence of such persons is a matter of the greatest importance to Government, as it is practically impossible to administer a district without it.\*

Thus a severe warning, couched in plain words but administered in private, to a Tahsildar, who is believed to be corrupt, or to a Jagirdar who is believed to oppress his people or to be guilty of other objectionable conduct, will often have the desired effect, whereas the humiliation of a public rebuke causes resentment and seldom secures the object with which it is given, namely, the improvement of future conduct.

10. Interviewing visitors is one of the most important parts of a civil officer's duties.

Some officers fix certain days of the week for the reception of visits at their private residences when they are at head-quarters.

If an officer lets it be known that he prefers to receive visitors within certain hours he will find that his wishes will generally be observed.

Visitors of the higher classes often write and ask for the appointment of a time at which they may call:

All visitors like to be received at an officer's private residence.

It must be remembered that a refusal to admit an Indian visitor is a distinct rebuff, and that therefore an officer should always make an effort to see all who call on him.

If, for any reason, an officer is unable to see all the people who have come to call on him, he should, if possible, avoid sending out a message to this effect by a chaprasi, as thereby he will certainly cause offence; whereas, if he himself goes to the waiting-room or verandah, in which his visitors are sitting, and explains briefly that owing to press of work or an important engagement he cannot grant them interviews, no offence will be caused.

11. The first difficulty which a junior officer encounters will be that of distinguishing between the various classes of Indians who visit him—to whom to offer a chair, with whom to shake hands, etc.

There are certain classes of persons who are entitled to receive 'chairs' when visiting European officers, but there is no harm in

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\* Editor's note : This is one of the clearest statements by the government that it realized its rule rested upon an ongoing Political System—Officers ruled only on the top and relied on a broad-based system for order.

offering a chair to a respectable visitor especially if he is educated and is accustomed to using chairs, who is not included in these classes. Ordinarily a chair should be offered to every persons paying an official visit to whom it would appear an ordinary matter of courtesy to offer one. Government servants drawing Rs. 50 or over as salary will be entitled to the same privilege when paying an official visit. As regards shaking hands there is no hard and fast rule, but it is usual to shake hands at the termination of an interview with Gazetted Officers, Commissioned Officers and Darbaris. Besides this, on special occasions it is a much valued sign of personal regard or appreciation of good service to shake hands with persons of lesser degree, especially if it is done in public.

Habits and customs are changing rapidly in the Punjab. Many of the young Indian gentlemen of the present generation have been greatly educated in England. This has resulted in a partial lifting of the 'veil' to which Sir J. Malcolm refers in his Minute. Thus it would be unreasonable to neglect to offer a chair or to demur about shaking hands with an Indian gentleman who had resided in Europe.

It must be remembered that ordinarily speaking an Indian visitor of the old school will not go until he is given leave to do so, therefore the host himself indicate when he considers it is time to terminate the interview.

Uneducated and even some educated Indians have an aggravating habit of not mentioning the object of their visit, until they rise to go, but officers must patiently bear with this old established custom and hear what the visitor has come to say.

12. Officers should take pains to satisfy themselves that their visitors are properly treated by the chaprasis.

Special care should be taken to see that chaprasis and private servants are not permitted to pester visitors for vails. Such vails are entirely improper and are more than ever objectionable when to secure them a menial servant keeps a respectable gentleman standing in the sun or does not provide them a chair when waiting. In the Punjab all district officers are required to set apart a proper place as a waiting room for visitors and Government either pays the rent for this or meets the cost of building it. In the case of junior officers this is not always possible, but a tactful officer can always make proper arrangements.

Chairs should always be provided at headquarters or at a rest-

house for visitors of position while waiting for an interview. When an officer is under canvas, it is not always possible to do so, but no offence will be caused, as the visitors will realize that the omission is unavoidable.

13. It has long been the custom for Indian visitors, especially of the trading classes, to present a small offering of fruit or vegetables which officials were expected to accept civilly. As, however, the acceptance of such offerings is liable to be misunderstood and misinterpreted as likely to influence an officer in favour of the man who presents it, and insinuations are made that the *dali* contains a good deal more than appears to the eye, a circular (No. 1737 (Home-General), dated the 22nd of January 1918) has been issued to the effect that for the future any *dali* or gift that is offered by or on behalf of an Indian to any Government official should be refused even at the risk of giving offence.

The prohibition is not, however, to be given an application beyond its obvious meaning, or interpreted as placing any restriction on friendly social intercourse between Indians and British officials.

14. Correspondence in English with Indian gentlemen should be conducted in exactly the same form as with Europeans of a similar or corresponding class.

Professional Indian gentlemen prefer to be addressed by name as Dear Mr.—/. To others it is usual to address them as Dear Lala Sahib, Dear Khan Sahib, etc.

Letters of congratulation upon the receipt of an honour, the birth of a son, or any auspicious event, and letters of condolence upon a bereavement, should be exactly the same as if addressed to a European, the degree of cordiality varying with the degree of intimacy.

15. An officer should be freely accessible to all his subordinates, and should make a point of knowing personally as many as possible of them. He should listen sympathetically and patiently to all representations and grievances. He should make no favourites and should let no one presume. A favourite or reputed favourite is sure to make capital out of his repute.

16. To all requests he should give a definite answer, if possible. If not possible, he should say that he will consider the request and should do so. He must never shirk saying "No" and, if a negative is necessary, the more decided it is the better, provided the course it is conveyed in courteous terms.

He should be shy of making promises but, if he makes one, he should always perform it.

17. He must make it clear that patronage is in his own hands and that while on occasion he may seek advice or information, the final decision rests with him. With a new officer this is about the first point upon which his subordinates will seek to satisfy themselves. It is even less harmful for an officer to make a wrong selection of his own motion than a good one under the influence of a subordinate. The first mistake can be rectified; the harm done by the second will endure for years. Absolute fairness, completely free from weakness, is the ideal. At the same time, obstinacy is not strength. It is often the accompaniment of weakness. It is only a strong man who can afford to acknowledge a mistake and to amend his own orders. The practice of bringing menials and subordinates from one post to another is prohibited, and officers should be careful to observe the Rule with the greatest strictness or otherwise their personal reputations for honesty and strength of character will inevitably suffer.

18. Junior officers should avoid giving written certificates to any subordinate: these are keenly sought after and are saved up for years. There are many officers who, after attaining years of greater discretion, have been embarrassed by the production of these relics of a generous but indiscreet youth. Any remarks which an officer may really wish to place on record can be entered in the character book or personal file of the official concerned.

19. An European officer should know something about the treatment he has a right to expect from Indians.

Indians as a race are most courteous. This applies to all, from the highest to the lowest. Out in the jungles a yokel, who is showing the way, will stop to break off a thorny branch which might cause inconvenience and of his own accord will often offer his 'chaddar' or blanket to place on the ground should an officer desire to sit down.

Almost every case of apparent rudeness is unintentional and due either to ignorance or diffidence.

Instances of deliberate discourtesy are rare, and when they do occur they are generally the act of some ill-conditioned upstart—but this is the same all the world over.

An officer can and should insist on respectful treatment from educated Indians, especially officials.

When such persons appear before him they should be suitably dressed.

Country shoes must always be left outside, but those who wear

shoes of European pattern are allowed to retain them. In former days Indians used always to alight when passing a person of superior position and, if carrying an umbrella open, would lower and fold it. Matters have now changed, and though these marks of special courtesy are shown especially in country districts, no officer should attempt to insist on this, and in ordinary circumstances no offence or rudeness is intended if an Indian does not follow the former custom.

An officer only makes himself ridiculous who is constantly on the look-out for offence and is too ready to take it. At the same time it is quite easy to tell when a person is intentionally offensive or unduly familiar. If such a thing occurs at an interview, it may be terminated abruptly with firmness and dignity and a subsequent interview may be refused.

Sometimes, however, the best punishment for a rudeness is to ignore it.

20. There is a further point which it is desired to bring to notice with reference to the modern Indian point of view regarding the return of calls made by Indian officers to the Public Services at an European officer's bungalow. An Indian Executive Engineer has written as follows:

"I can say so much that during my service of 18 years, only two civil officers gave me the honour of return calls. I have invariably made calls on civil officers when coming into a new station. In order to create better social understanding between European and Indian officers, I think both should be frank and communicative. This will not only bring about better understanding between the two classes of officers, but will prove a great benefit to both. To start with a clean slate, I think fresh instructions about social approachment between European and Indian officers be issued. The European will obtain real insight into matters Indian by free exchange of views with the Indian officers better than he can ever get from lengthy interviews with zamindar and rais class. The latter generally go to see officers as a matter of routine and probably with an idea of reward lurking in their minds. The position of an Indian officers is quite different from that of a rais. He considers himself a part of the machinery called Government and therefore has some sort of a halo of self-respect created around him. This phenomenon is less evident in subordinate services of officers promoted from such services, while amongst the more educated persons and those directly recruited this appears to a

marked degree. The present day idea of extinction of the colour bar and equality of treatment has made an Indian officer more sensitive to the question of his self-respect. I am writing this from my experience of the Indian officers with whom I come in daily contact. I can only submit the following few practical suggestions which, if acted upon, would go a good deal in the direction of removing cause of several misunderstandings:

- (1) When an Indian officer calls on a European officer *at his residence*, the orderly should at once report the arrival, i.e., convey the card to the officer concerned, who should give necessary instructions about the visitor. It has happened several times that the orderlies do not carry the card inside saying they do so when Sahib comes to office room or such and such room. This is very annoying. The orderly is most probably obeying his master's orders...but to leave us at the mercy of orderlies is certainly impolite and discourteous.
- (2) When an officer is busy and cannot immediately see an Indian officer he should be shown into the drawing room or office room and not made to wait in the verandah of visitors.
- (3) As regard official visits for settlement of official matters, I would rather prefer them to be made by appointment, and when the visit is settled it should be given preference over other matters.
- (4) The European officers should encourage Indian officers to repeat social calls, and such calls should be reciprocated so far as possible.
- (5) The Indian officers have also to shake off lethargy and shyness and should meet the Europeans more frequently, not for mere 'salaaming' but to improve social relations. Mutual better understanding will result as soon as officers meet each other on terms of equality in matters social.

Special attention should be paid to all five suggestions in this letter. As regards suggestion (4) where local Indian Heads of Departments, such as Executive Engineers, Superintendents of Police, Civil Surgeons and so forth make a call on an European officer, he should return the call at the Indian officer's house, as he would do had the call been paid by an European officer. It will generally be found that Indians have a room or "baithak" at their houses where they can



receive visitors without any infringement of the 'Pardah.' The return of such calls may in cases where the Indian official is not likely to be expecting visitors, be facilitated by a tactful enquiry made beforehand as to the time at which it will be convenient for the call to be returned.

## APPENDIX

Instructions regarding intercourse between European officials and Natives issued by Sir John Malcolm, Agent of the Governor-General, in his Minute, dated 28th June, 1821, to his Assistants in Central India.

Our success and moderation, contrasted with the misrule and violence to which a great part of the population of India have for more than a century been exposed, have at this moment raised the reputation of the British nation so high, that men have forgotten, in the contemplation of the security and prosperity they enjoy under strangers, their feelings of patriotism, but these are feelings which that very knowledge that it is our duty to impart must gradually revive and bring into action. The people of India must, by a recurring sense of benefits, have amends made them for the degradation of continuing subject to foreign masters; and this can alone be done by the combined efforts of every individual employed in a station of trust and responsibility to render popular a government which, though not national, has its foundations laid deep on the principles of toleration, justice, and wisdom. Every agent of Government should study and understand the above facts. He should not content himself with having acquired a knowledge of the languages and of the customs of those with whom he has intercourse. All his particular acts (even to the manner of them) should be regulated by recurrence to the foundation of our rule and a careful observation of those principles by which it has been established and can alone be maintained. Of the importance of this I cannot better state my opinion than by expressing my full conviction that, independent of the prescribed duties which every qualified officer performs, there is no person in a situation of any consequence who does not, both in the substance and manner of his conduct, do

something every day of his life which, as it operates upon the general interests of the empire through the feelings of the circle he controls or rules, has an unseen effect in strengthening or weakening the Government by which he is employed. My belief that what I have assumed is correct, will be my excuse for going into some minuteness in my general instructions to those under my orders.

The first, and one of the most important, point is the manner of European superiors towards the Natives. It would be quite out of place, in this paper, to speak of the necessity of kindness and of an absence of all violence; this must be a matter of course with those to whom it is addressed : there is much more required from them than that conciliation which is a duty, but which, when it appears as such, loses half its effect. It must, to make an impression, be a habit of the mind, grounded on a favourable consideration of the qualities and merits of those to whom it extends; and this impression, I am satisfied, every person will have, who, after attaining a thorough knowledge of the real character of those with whom he has intercourse, shall judge them, without prejudice or self-conceit, by a standard which is suited to their beliefs, their usages, their habits, their occupations, their rank in life, the ideas they have imbibed from infancy, and the stage of civilization to which the community, as a whole, are advanced. If he does so with that knowledge and that temper of mind which are essential to render him competent to form an opinion, he will find enough of virtue, enough of docility and disposition to improvement, enough of regard and observance of all the best and most sacred ties of society, to create an esteem for individuals, and an interest in the community—which, when grounded on a sincere conviction of its being deserved, will render his kindness natural and conciliating. All human beings, down to the lowest links of the chain, inclusive of children, are quick in tracing the source of the manners of others, and, above all, of their superiors—when that is regulated by the head, not the heart; when it proceeds from reason, not from feeling, it cannot please; for it has in it, if at all artificial, a show of design which repels, as it generates suspicion. When this manner takes another shape, when kindness and consideration appear as acts of condescension, it must be felt offensive. Men may dread, but can never love or regard, those who are continually humiliating them by the parade of superiority.

I have recommended those foundations of manner, towards the Natives of India, upon which I feel my own to be grounded. I can

recollect (and I do it with shame) the period when I thought I was very superior to those with whom my duty made me associate, but as my knowledge of them, and of myself, improved, the distance between us gradually lessened. I have seen and heard much of our boasted advantages over them, but cannot think that, if, all the ranks of the different communities of Europe and India are comparatively viewed, there is just ground for any very arrogant feeling on the part of the inhabitants of the former, nor can I join in that commonplace opinion which condemns in a sweeping way the Natives of this country as men, taking the best of them, not only unworthy of trust, and devoid of principle, but of too limited intelligence and reach of thought, to allow of Europeans, with large and liberal minds and education, having rational or satisfactory intercourse with them. Such impressions, if admitted, must prove vital as to the manner of treating the Natives of India. I shall therefore say a few words upon the justice of the grounds upon which they rest. The man who considers them in this light can grant little or no credit to the high characters and the eulogies which are given to individuals and great bodies of men in their own histories, traditions and records. He must then judge them by his own observations and knowledge, and his opinion will, in all probability, be formed not comparatively with Europeans of their own class of life, but with the public servants of Government: a class of men who are carefully educated, whose ambition is stimulated by the highest prospects of preferment, and whose integrity is preserved by adequate salaries through every grade of their service. Before this last principle was introduced (which is little more than thirty years) the European servants of Government were in the habit of making money in modes not unsimilar to those we now reproach the Natives in our employ with doing; and it may here be asked, if the same endeavours have been made to alter the habits of the latter as the former. I believe the contrary to be the fact, and that the system since introduced has not operated more to elevate the European, than to sink and depress the Native character; but this is not the place for the discussion of this large question.

Many of the moral defects of the Natives of India are to be referred to that misrule and oppression from which they are now in great degree emancipated. I do not know the example of any great population, in similar circumstances, preserving, through such a period of changes and tyrannical rules, so much of virtue and so many good

qualities as are to be found in a great proportion of the inhabitants of this country. This is to be accounted for, in some degree, by the institutions of the Hindu, particularly that of caste, which appears to have raised them to their present rank in human society, at a very remote period, but it has certainly tended to keep them stationary at that point of civil order to which they were thus early advanced. With a just admiration of the effects of many of their institutions, particularly those parts of them which cause in vast classes not merely an absence of the common vices of theft, drunkenness, and violence, but preserve all the virtuous ties of family and kindred relations, we must all deplore some of their usages and weak superstitions, but what individuals or what races of men are without great and manifold errors and imperfections, and what mind that is not fortified with ignorance or pride can, and on such grounds, come to a severe judgment against a people like that of India?

I must here remark that I have invariably found, unless in a few cases where knowledge had not overcome self-sufficiency and arrogance, that in proportion as European officers, Civil and Military, advanced in their acquaintance with the language and customs of the Natives of India, they became more sincerely kind to them, and, in the contrary, ignorance always accompanied that selfish pride and want of consideration which held them light, or treated them with harshness.

I am quite satisfied in my own mind that if there is one cause more than another, that will impede our progress to the general improvement of India, it is a belief formed by its population, from the manner of their English superiors, that they are viewed by them as an inferior and degraded race; but, on the contrary, if the persons employed in every branch of the administration of this great country, under the check of which they act, comport themselves towards the people whom it is their duty to make happy with that sincere humility of heart which always belongs to real knowledge, and which attaches while it elevates, they will contribute, by such a manner, more than any measures of boasted wisdom ever can, to the strength and duration of their Government.

It is of importance, before I conclude this part of the subject, to state my opinion, that in our manner to the Natives, though it is our duty to understand and to pay every proper deference to their customs and usages, and to conform to these as far as we can with

propriety, particularly on points where the religious prejudices or the rank of those with whom we have intercourse require it, yet we should always preserve the European, for to adopt their manners is a departure from the very principle on which every impression of our superiority that rests upon good foundation is grounded. We should take a lesson on such points from what we see occur to Native Princes and others, who ape English habits and modes: they lose ground with one class—to that which they belong—without gaining with the other—that to which they wish to approximate. The fact is, they ultimately lose with the latter, for even their attachment is useless, when they cease to have influence with their own tribe. The European officer who assumes Native manners and usages may please a few individuals, who are flattered or profited by his departure from the habits of his country, but even with these, familiarity will not be found to increase respect, and the adoption of such a course will be sure to sink him in the estimation of the mass of the community, both European and Native, among whom he resides.

The intercourse to be maintained with the Natives within your circle is of two kinds—private and official.

The first should extend as much as possible to all ranks and classes, and be as familiar, as kind, and as frequent, as the difference of habits and pursuits will admit.

There is a veil between the Natives of India and their European superiors, which leaves the latter ignorant, in an extraordinary degree, of the real character of the former. He can only judge his own domestics by that he sees of their conduct in his presence, of the manner in which they perform their other duties in life, he is, if not ignorant, but imperfectly informed: so many minute obstacles, grounded upon caste, usages and religion, oppose an approach to closer acquaintance, that it can never be generally attained: but in private intercourse much may be learnt that will facilitate the performance of public duty, and give that knowledge of the usages and feelings of the various classes of the Natives, which will enable its possessors to touch every chord with effect. In joining with them in field sports, in an unceremonious interchange of visits with the most respectable, and in seeking the society of the most learned, the European public officer will not only gain information, but impart complete confidence, and lay the grounds of that personal attachment which will ever be found of the greatest aid to his public labours.

He will also obtain by such habits of private intercourse the means of elevating those he esteems by marks of notice and regard; but in pursuing this course he must beware, lest he lose his object by falling into the weakness or indulgences of the persons with whom he thus associates. It is in the performance of this part of his duty, when all the pride of station is laid aside, that he must most carefully guard that real superiority, which he derives from better knowledge and truer principles of morality and religion; for it is from the impression made by the possession, without the ostentation, of those higher qualities that he must expect the benefits I have described as likely to result from a familiar and private intercourse with the Natives under his direction and control.

In all official intercourse with the Natives, one of the first points of importance is that these, whatever be their rank, class, or business should, have complete and easy access to personal communication with their European superior. The necessity of this arises out of the character of our rule and of those over whom it is established. It is sufficiently galling for the people of India to have foreign masters; the impression this feeling must continually excite can only be mitigated or removed by a recurring sense of the advantages they derived from the wisdom and justice of their European superiors, and this can only be effected by direct communication with them. Though Native servants must be employed and trusted, and though it is quite essential to behave to all with kindness, and to raise the higher classes of them by a treatment which combines consideration and respect, yet they can never without hazard be used as exclusive mediums of communication: they are allowed frequent approach to an European officer in the exercise of authority, give them opportunities of abusing his confidence if they desire it; and men under our power will have, in aggravation of the feeling arising out of subjection to foreign rule, that of being to a certain extent at the mercy of persons of their own nation whom they neither trust nor respect. There is no remedy for such an evil except being completely easy of access, but this, however, much the superior may desire to, is not to be established without difficulty and perseverance. It affects the interest and consequence of every man in his employ from the highest to the lowest, but in proportion to their efforts to counteract it, so must his be to carry this important point on which, more than all others, the integrity of his personal administration and the good of the country depend.

No Native servant, high or low, must be allowed the privilege of either introducing or stopping an applicant, or a complainant. All such must come with confidence to the European superior, or to such Assistant as he may specifically direct to receive or hear them. It requires much temper and patience, constant activity, and no slight sacrifice of personal comfort, to maintain an intercourse with the Natives upon this footing; but unless it be done (I speak here from the fullest experience), the government of control now established in Central India cannot be carried on for any period, and the changes which must ensue from relaxation in this particular will be brought about in the manner most unfavourable to our character and reputation.

The next important point to be observed in official intercourse with the Natives is 'Publicity'. There can be no occasion to expatiate here upon the utility of this principle. It is the happy privilege of a State, so constituted as that of the English in India, to gain strength in the ratio that it measures, and grounds on which they are adopted, are made public; and this is above all essential in a quarter of India where we are as yet but imperfectly understood. There are and can be no secrets in our ordinary proceedings, and every agent will find his means of doing good advanced, his toil lessened, and the power of the designing and corrupt to misrepresent his actions or intentions decreased, in the proportion that he transacts affairs in public. He should avoid, as much as he possibly can, private conferences with those in his employ or others. These will be eagerly sought for; they give the individual thus admitted the appearances of favour and influence; and there is no science in which the more artful among the Natives are greater adepts, than that of turning to account the real or supposed confidence of their superiors. I know no mode of preventing the mischief which this impression, if it becomes general, gives men the power of effecting, but habitual publicity in transacting business. This will, no doubt, be found to have inconveniences, which will be purposely increased by those who have their game to play, and indeed others; for Natives of rank and station, even when they have no corrupt views, are from habit and self-importance attached to a secret and mysterious way of conducting both great and small affairs.

The forms of the official intercourse between European agents and Natives of rank were, before we obtained paramount power, a matter of more moment, and one on which we could less relax than at

present, because our motives were at that period more liable to be mistaken. Though it is essential in our intercourse with natives who are attached to and give value to ceremonies, to understand such perfectly, and to claim from all what is due to our station, that we may not sink the rank of the European superior in the estimation of those subject to his control, it is now the duty of the former to be much more attentive to the respect which he gives than what he receives, particularly in his intercourse with men of high rank. The Princes and Chiefs of India may, in different degrees, be said to be all dependent on the British Government : many have little more than the name of that power they before enjoyed; but they seem, as they lose the substance, to cling to the forms of station. The pride of reason may smile at such a feeling; but it exists, and it would be alike opposite to the principles of humanity and polity to deny its gratification.

In official intercourse with the lower classes, the latter should be treated according to the usages of the country, as practiced by the most indulgent of their native superiors. It will be found that they require personal notice and consideration in proportion as their state removed from that knowledge which belongs to civilization; and it is on this ground that the Bheel must have more attention paid to him than the ryot. It is more difficult to give confidence to his mind, and to make him believe in the sincerity and permanence of the kindness with which he is treated, because he is in a condition more remote from the party with whom he communicates, and, before he can be reclaimed he must be approximated.

There are few points on which more care is required than the selection and employment of Native servants for the public service. There is no objection to an officer continuing to keep in service a person he has bought from a distant province, who has been long with him, and on whose fidelity and competence he can repose; but, generally speaking, it is much better to entertain respectable Natives or old residents of the country in which he is employed. Their advantages over foreigners are very numerous. The principal are, their acquaintance with the petty interests of the country, and their knowledge of all the prejudices and the jealousies of the different classes of the community to which they belong. On all these points the superior should be minutely informed, and, if he employs men not personally acquainted with the disposition and condition of those under his charge or control, his information on such subjects must come



through multiplied mediums; which is in itself a serious evil. But, independent of this, the employment of the Natives of a distant province is always unpopular, and they are generally viewed with dislike and suspicion by the higher and more respectable classes of the country into which they are introduced. This excites a feeling in the minds of the former which either makes them keep aloof from all connection with the inhabitants, or seek the society and use as instruments men who are discontented or of indifferent character. It is difficult to say which of these causes has the worst effect. The one gives an impression of pride, if not contempt, and the other of design and an inclination to intrigue, and both operate unfavourably to the local reputation of the master.

I have observed that the Natives who are least informed of the principles of our rule are ready to grant a respect and confidence to an English officer, which they refuse to persons of their own tribe; but they are apt to form an unfavourable opinion of his disposition and character from any bad conduct of his disposition and character from any bad conduct of his Native servants if foreigners; on the contrary, when the latter are members of their own community the exposure of their errors or crimes, while it brings shame and conveys a salutary lesson to the class to which they belong, is attended with the effect of raising, instead of depressing, the European superior in their estimation.

The employment of the lower classes of public servants requires much attention. These should be selected on the same principles that have already been stated, with reference to the duties they are to perform which ought always to be exactly defined, and their conduct vigilantly watched. It will indeed be found useful to render as public as possible the nature of their employment, and to call upon all local authorities to aid us in the prevention of those unauthorized and odious acts of injustice and oppression towards the inhabitants of the country which this class will, in spite of all our efforts, find opportunities of committing. I speak from the fullest experience when I state, that, though the Natives of India may do full justice to the purity of our intentions and the excellence of the principles of our rule, they are undisguised in their sentiments regarding those parts of our administration in which the very dregs of their own community are employed. They cannot, indeed, but see with feelings of detestation and resentment a man raised from the lowest of their own

ranks, and decorated with an official badge, become the very next moment insolent to persons to whom he and his family have been for ages submissive, or turn the extortioner of money from those tribes among which he has before lived as an humble individual.

The power of this class of servants to injure our reputation is everywhere great, but more so in the proportion that the Natives of the country are ignorant of our real character, and where their dread of our power is excessive. Of the mischief they have done, or rather tried to do, in Malwa I can speak from a perfect knowledge. I have endeavoured with unremitting solicitude to counteract their impositions and oppressions, by publishing proclamations and giving high rewards to all who informed against or seized any of my servants when attempting the slightest interference in the country, or affecting to have any business beyond that of carrying a letter, or some specified or limited duty; but I have, nevertheless, been compelled within three years to publicly punish and discharge one Moonshee, two Moot-suddies or Writers, three Jemadars, and upwards of fifty Hircarrahs; and almost an equal number of the same class, belonging to other public officers, have been taken and punished, or banished from the country. These examples will show the danger of being tempted, by any convenience of service, or a desire to accelerate the accompaniment of our objects, to employ such instruments with any latitude of action.

## Kapurthala Will Case (1852-1869) Its Reflections on British Policy\*

A. C. ARORA

The policy adopted by the British Government of India towards the Native States had neither been consistent nor uniform. Not often it varied from Governor-General to Governor-General and from State to State. And as such the specialised intensive study of British Policy towards the individual States assumes substantial importance. The Kapurthala Will Case is one of the most significant issues in the history of British relationship with Kapurthala State. Starting, as it did, in 1852 when Lord Dalhousie was the Governor-General under the East India Company and terminating in the early months of 1869 when Lord Mayo had taken over as the Viceroy, this case saw about half a decade of East India Company's rule and more than a decade of the Crown's rule. It came into intimate contact with at least one Governor-General of the Company (Dalhousie) and two Viceroys of the Crown (Canning and John Lawrence). The case had so momentous implications that all the concerned British officials of the period, the successive Commissioners, the Chief Commissioners, the Lieutenant Governors and the Governors-General, expressed their view-points very strongly and not infrequently their opinions were divergent. So much so, that the case for sometime appeared to have brought to the fore the question of British policy towards Kapurthala State in its entirety. The purpose of this paper is to analyse the case critically and to highlight its reflections on the British policy towards the Ahluwalia State.

On September 13, 1852, Raja Nihal Singh, the fourth and much talked about ruler of Kapurthala, breathed his last. About a couple of months before his death, he had executed a *Wasseatnama* or a will in which it was said :

1. that after his death his eldest son, Kanwar Randhir Singh, the heir apparent should become the ruler of the State;
2. that his two other sons from the second wife, Kanwar Bikram Singh and Kanwar Suchet Singh, should each be given an

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estate of the net value of one lakh of rupees without any sort of Government *nazrana*;

3. that the criminal jurisdiction of all the three estates should be wielded by the heir-apparent, but if the two younger brothers be dis-satisfied, the criminal jurisdiction of their estates might be taken over by the British Government;
4. that every one of them should "serve the British Government to the utmost of his power and should consider it a cause of great honour and benefit", for "their continuance in rule depends upon the blessing of God and the protection of the British Government";
5. that if this paper is approved by the Board of Administration, he would then submit another paper containing details about the disposal of his movable and immovable property.<sup>1</sup>

It may be observed at the very outset without any hazard or hesitation that considered strictly and exclusively from the point of the interests of the State, it was not a wise decision of the Raja to have made provision for the partition of his State. Whatever be his infatuation for his so-called second wife and whatever be the affectionate feelings which he thereof harboured for his two younger sons from her, Nihal Singh had obviously betrayed a lamentable lack of political foresight by not caring to keep the integrity of his State intact. And then to provide for the transfer of the criminal jurisdiction of the two estates to the British Government if the two younger sons so liked was understandably an other special favour to the two youngsters, but it was at the same time repugnant to the larger interests of the State. The purpose of the Will was said to be the wish of the Raja that "the three brothers should live together after his death on good terms and in peace, with friendship and love for each other, and that no sign of disagreement or hostility should appear amongst them." But in practice the Will did not, indeed it could not, achieve this desired purpose, for the provision of separate estates in the will was bound to furnish, sooner or later, great encouragement and strength to the two younger brothers to adopt intransigent attitude towards their elder brother despite the fraternal and generous attitude of the latter. Regarding the fourth point of the Will, it may be recapit-

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1. From Board of Administration to Government of India, No. 903, dated 7th September, 1852, Foreign Political Proceedings (to be abbreviated hereafter as F.P.P.), 8 October, 1852, Nos. 185-186.

tulated that Nihal Singh had adopted hostile attitude towards the British during the First Anglo-Sikh War and as a 'signal punishment' for that he had been deprived of his Cis-Sutlej possessions. The Sirdar had, however, been left in the independent possession of his estates in the Jullundur Doab and his service-engagement of supplying contingent of 400 horsemen and 500 infantry had been commuted into cash payment of Rs. 1,12,800 per annum.<sup>2</sup> During the Second Anglo-Sikh War, the Ahluwalia Chief had remained loyal to the British and expressed his readiness to support them. By so doing he had succeeded in winning back the goodwill of the British Government. In 1849 the then Governor-General, Lord Dalhousie had paid a visit to Kapurthala and exalted Nihal Singh to the rank of a Raja.<sup>3</sup> Thus learning from his personal experience that disloyalty to the British Government would mean reduction, perhaps extinction, of the State whereas loyalty would pay rich dividends, Nihal Singh advised his sons in the Will that they should, each of them, serve the British Government to the utmost of their power.

After the death of Nihal Singh, Randhir Singh, the heir-apparent became the ruler of the State and he was recognized by the British Government.<sup>4</sup> The new Raja immediately applied his efforts to the task of winning over his two younger brothers and setting at naught that part of the Will which provided for the partition of the State and which he considered to be unjust to himself as well as to the State. His efforts did not prove infructuous, as both of his younger brothers readily responded to his call. On 17th September, 1852 they signed a covenant in which they solemnly declared and affirmed that they would accept any arrangement which their respected eldest brother, Raja Randhir Singh Ji, the substitute of their father, would make to administer the affairs of the State and to maintain its stability, that they would not turn their head from subordination and allegiance to His Highness and that if the supreme Government in accordance with their father's will decided upon partition and separation of their estates, they would under no circumstances consent

2. Griffin, Lepel H. *The Rajas of the Punjab* (London, 1873), pp. 496-501.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 502.

4. From Board of Administration Punjab to Govt. of India, No. 939, dated 20th September, 1852, F.P.P., 8 October, 1852, No. 187. From Govt. of India to Board of Administration Punjab, No. 3614, dated 7th October, 1852, *Ibid.*, no. 188.

to that <sup>5</sup> They also addressed a *Khureeta* to the Commissioner of Trans-Sutlej States expressing their desire to live together with their brother and opposing the partition of the State as provided in the Will of their late father on the ground that "the measure is calculated to reduce the principality to insignificance."<sup>6</sup> This *Khureeta* was forwarded to the Board of Administration on 5th October, 1852.

Whereas all the three members of the Board unanimously agreed to recommend to the Supreme Government the suspension of the carrying out of the Will so long as the three brothers lived together in amity, there was a sharp difference of opinions on this occasion regarding the general policy to be adopted towards the new Raja of Kapurthala. John Lawrence, the senior member of the Board who professed to have had intimate connections with the State of Kapurthala during the period of the late ruler (for he had acted as the Commissioner and Superintendent of Trans-Sutlej States), did not seem to have been happy with the reconciliation brought about among the brothers and he appeared to have been adamant upon bringing about the disintegration of the State by other means. He wrote three minutes in which he expressed his view-point very strongly. He was of the opinion that full and fair advantage should be taken of the demise of Nihal Singh and the new succession in order to modify and correct the evils of the old arrangement. He proposed that by a new arrangement with Raja Randhir Singh the British Government should take lands in lieu of the *nazrana* which the late Raja Nihal Singh paid annually to the British Government. He suggested specifically taking over Phagwara, Bhunga and other outlying lands. He also pleaded that the British Government should assume the police powers hitherto exercised by the Raja. If these proposals were accepted, he said, they would "lessen the evils inseparable to the existence of so large and independent jurisdiction in the heart of the Jullundur Doab."<sup>7</sup> These proposals, it may be noted, are not much different, in their substantial implications, from the main provisions of the Will. One is, therefore, inclined to suspect if it was not with

5. Joint Covenant of Bikram Singh and Suchet Singh, dated 17th September, 1852, Appendix to the Memorial of Raja of Kapurthala to Secretary of State for India, dated 4th September, 1868, F.P.P., October 1868, No. 329, p. 21.
6. *Khureeta* from Bikram Singh and Suchet Singh to the Commissioner, Trans-Sutlej States, dated 20th September, 1852, *Ibid.*, p. 22.
7. Minutes of John Lawrence, dated 11th October, 1852, 1st December, 1852, and

the connivance of John Lawrence that Nihal Singh had drafted his Will. The more so when John Lawrence, on his own testimony, had discussed the question of the Will with the late Raja Nihal Singh. The suspicion derives further strength from the fact that John Lawrence always supported the partition of the State among the brothers whenever he found a favourable opportunity to do so. Be that as it may, there is no gainsaying the fact that John Lawrence was a staunch advocate of reducing the estates as well as the powers of the new Raja of Kapurthala.<sup>8</sup> He strongly held that such an occasion should not be missed, as it would be very difficult to weaken his authority.

Diametrically opposed to this was the viewpoint of Henry Lawrence, the President of the Board who wrote three minutes, each in reply to that of John Lawrence. Montgomery, the third member of the Board, simply supported his viewpoint. In brief, they opined that it would be tantamount to a breach of faith to take lands in lieu of *nazrana* from the new Raja or to assume the police jurisdiction of the State, for the British Government had granted Jullundur possessions in sovereignty to the late Ahluwalia Chief for ever and not for life. They, therefore, recommended that there should be no alterations in the existing arrangement so long as the present Raja behaved well and his brothers were contented to remain under his jurisdiction.<sup>9</sup>

The Governor-General in Council after examining all these minutes decided the Kapurthala estates may remain undivided for the present but "if discord should arise among them (brothers) hereafter, as is very probable, the Will of the late Raja should have effect given to it. In that case the shares of the two younger brothers thus broken off from the Raja's share would become ordinary jagirs into which our administration would enter." As regards the other two points raised, His Excellency in Council generally concurred with the view-point of Henry Lawrence, ruling that the Raja may be persuaded but not compelled to give lands in lieu of *nazrana* and that the Raja may be left in possession of police and revenue jurisdiction. It was, however, laid down that the term sovereignty had not been properly used in reference to the status of the Ahluwalia Chief, as he had not

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13th January, 1853, *Ibid.*, pp. 25-27, 29-30.

8. Cf. Arora, A.C., *John Lawrence and Kapurthala State* (pp. 151-161), Punjab History Conference, Fifth Session, 1970, pp. 151-52.

been sovereign either under the Lahore Government or under the British Government, though he had some of the powers usually attached to sovereignty (namely police and revenue).<sup>10</sup> Thus for the time being the Ahluwalia state was saved from disintegration as the Raja very wisely and determinedly refused to give lands in lieu of *nazrana*. It must have come as a sore disappointment to John Lawrence who had, by this time, become the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab, and in that capacity he had received this rather unpalatable note. Raja Randhir Singh, on the other hand, had a reason to congratulate himself for having escaped from the corroding imperialistic imposition of Lord Dalhousie, and for this Henry Lawrence amply deserved thanks of the Raja.

But John Lawrence and Lord Dalhousie seemed to be having this earnest wish and hope that this arrangement would not, as it could not, last for long and sooner rather than later the quarrel would arise among the brothers which would provide them the much-desired opportunity for effecting the partition of the State in accordance with not only the will of their late father but also their own wish. And the course of events in the coming few months did not belie their hope. Suchet Singh, the youngest of the three brothers began to quarrel with the Raja and demanded the separation of his estate. Bikram Singh, the other brother, however, supported the Raja. He was content with allowance of rupees 25,000 per annum which he received from him. He not only expressed his full satisfaction with 'the greatest kindness and consideration' evinced by the Raja towards him in all respects but also wrote that Suchet Singh's youth and inexperience under the influence of a wretch (Seva Ram) were taking him away from the right path.<sup>11</sup> John Lawrence, as could be expected of him, willingly sanctioned the division of Suchet Singh's share. The Raja, who very sagaciously wanted to maintain the integrity of his State, appealed against its partition. He put forth two arguments for setting aside the will of his late father—first, the

9. Minutes of Sir H.M. Lawrence, dated 16th October, 1852, 8th December, 1852 and 15th January, 1853, Appendix to the Memorial of Raja of Kapurthala to Secretary of State for India, *op. cit.*, pp. 25, 28 and 31; Minute of R. Montgomery, dated 2nd December, 1852, *Ibid.*, p. 27.

10. From Government of India to Chief Commissioner, Punjab, No. 907, dated 21st February, 1853, F.P.P., March 1853, No. 52.

11. From Bikram Singh to Commissioner Trans-Sutlej States, dated 27th July 1853, F.P.P., 9 September, 1853, No. 124.



two younger brothers were illegitimate and second, it was not the custom to divide lands of a Chiefship. John Lawrence considered both these arguments to be untenable<sup>12</sup> and recommended to His Excellency in Council that their previous decision allowing the provisions of the will to be carried out if the brothers so desired it, should be upheld.<sup>13</sup> Accepting the recommendations of the Chief Commissioner, the Governor-General in Council ruled that the provision of the will be put into execution.<sup>14</sup> Cont I...P. (8). Accordingly, the talukas of Bhunga and Wayan were marked out for Suchet Singh. It is significant to note in this connection that at first Phagwara was considered in place of Bhunga but then it was dropped on the ground: "Phagwara is by much the more important of the two and hence it appeared to me inappropriate and unjust to transfer it to the third brother, seeing that the second brother Bikram Singh to whom a similar jagir had been bequeathed had by far the best claim to it and was justly entitled to expect that it should be reserved for him to take possession of at any time he should desire a like partition." It may be reiterated that as a member of the Board of Administration, John Lawrence pleaded for the severing away of Bhunga and Phagwara from Kapurthala State in lieu of *nazrana*, when the provision of the will, to his disappointment, could not be enforced due to reconciliation among the brothers. Now he had got the opportunity for putting into execution what he had long desired and he was up at it in the capacity of Chief Commissioner. More significant still, Bikram Singh at this time did not desire partition of the State but despite that a more important place, Phagwara, was reserved for him with the obvious intention and eager expectation that he would likewise demand the separation of his share.

While the details regarding the separation of Suchet Singh's estate were being worked out, reconciliation took place between the two brothers. Suchet Singh presented a written agreement or *Iqrarnama* to the fact that he would content himself with a jagir of rupees 50,000 to be held in dependence to his brother. In the letter addressed by

12. From Chief Commissioner, Punjab, to Commissioner, Trans-Sutlej States, No. 403, dated 24th May, 1853, *Ibid.*, No. 126.

13. From Chief Commissioner, Punjab, to Government of India, No. 575, dated 12th August, 1853, *Ibid.*, No. 125.

14. From Government of India to Chief Commissioner, Punjab, No. 3979, dated 9th September, 1853, *Ibid.*, No. 128.

the Commissioner Trans-Sutlej States to the Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, it was strongly recommended that Suchet Singh's request to withdraw his application for partition be favourably considered and the *Iqrarnama* between the two brothers confirmed, even if it involved some modification in the will. It was also pointed out for the consideration of the Chief Commissioner that if lands worth two lakh of rupees be deducted from the whole estate, the remainder would be barely sufficient for the necessary expenses of administration and, in all probability, the Raja would be drawn into debt as a consequence of which the British Government might take land in lieu of cash, thereby completing the ruin of the Chiefship.<sup>15</sup>

Such a recommendation was not to the taste of John Lawrence who was for the partition of the State. He was, therefore, not inclined to accept it. He argued that the brothers had been given ample time to settle their affairs, that Suchet Singh had petitioned for the separation of his share and that the proceedings had gone far too advanced to be revoked. In regard to the fiscal prospects of the State, he remarked very imperiously that the Raja must reduce his expenditure on establishments, Dharmarth or religious grants, etc., and balance his expenses to his income. The apprehended ruin of the State would be a consequence not of the present arrangement but of Raja's own mismanagement and extravagance. If the Raja did not prove prudent and economical, he added callously; "he must suffer like other improvident persons."<sup>16</sup> He refused to consider representations of the Raja against the partition of his State.<sup>17</sup> So the matter was set at rest.

## II

Towards the close of the year 1859 the case was reopened. During the interval of the last four and a half year, to be sure, some very momentous developments had taken place. In the course of the stupendous rising of the natives against the British (1857-59), Raja Randhir Singh had rendered valuable services to the British which had been

15. From Commissioner Trans-Sutlej States, to Chief Commissioner Punjab, No. 12-140, dated 16th January, 1855, F.P.P., February 1855, No. 77.
16. From Chief Commissioner Punjab to Commissioner Trans-Sutlej States, No. 79, dated 31st January, 1855, *Ibid.*, No. 78.
17. From Raja Randhir Singh to John Lawrence, dated 5th May, 1855, and from John Lawrence to Raja Randhir Singh, dated 10th May, 1855, Appendix to Memorial of Raja Randhir Singh to Secretary of State for India, *op. cit.*, pp. 55 and 58.

duly acknowledged and appreciated by the British authorities.<sup>18</sup> The rule of the East India Company had come to an end and the Crown had taken over the territories and revenues of India. The Queen's proclamation of November 1st, 1858, had formally announced the adoption of a new and more considerate policy towards the Native Princes. It had been said in very unambiguous terms that there would be no encroachment hereafter on the territories, rights and honour of the Princes. Lord Dalhousie was no longer the Governor-General and along with him had departed high-handed and unscrupulous policy towards the Native States. John Lawrence, as also the office of Chief Commissioner, had gone and Punjab had become a Lieutenant-Governor's province. It was, in a word, the time of the Crown, of Canning as the Viceroy and of Montgomery as the Lieutenant-Governor of Punjab. Under these changed circumstances the Kapurthala Will Case was bound to assume a new trend—a trend understandably favourable to Raja Randhir Singh.

The Raja who had all along been protesting against the partition of his State succeeded in affecting a compromise with Suchet Singh in 1859. Both the brothers exchanged formal agreements, Suchet Singh promising fealty and obedience and the Raja binding himself to leave him in possession of the lands he was already holding and to continue the grant to him and his heirs on certain conditions specified in the agreement. As a result of this compromise both the brothers desired the restoration of the separated lands to the Kapurthala State. It may be noted that the Raja, despite his meagre economic resources, had agreed to confirm Suchet Singh in possession of lands worth one lakh of rupees per annum obviously because he had the keenest desire to regain the integrity of his State and to eliminate British control over an erstwhile part of his State, which appeared to him to be so very unjust and intolerable. Major Lake, the Commissioner of Trans-Sutlej States in his letter to Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab made a strong case for acceptance of the demand of the two brothers. He observed that the popular sense of the country was not in favour of partition, that the independent provision for the younger sons was not legitimate in so far as they were sons of a low born slave woman, that the decision established a precedent and enforced a principle

18. F.P.P., 18 December, 1857, Nos. 381-382; 2 July, 1858, Nos. 191 to 193; 22 October, 1858, Nos. 256-257; 30 December, 1859, Nos. 1779 to 1781; Also see Griffin, *op. cit.*, pp. 526-530.

which, if widely acted upon, would lead to the dismemberment of every independent principality, that the Lieutenant Governor as a result of his meeting with Raja Randhir Singh and his brother at Jullundur on 22nd December, 1859, had satisfied himself by personal enquiries that the desire of the brothers to be reconciled was sincere, that the request preferred by the brothers would not involve the setting aside of the will, its only implication being that Suchet Singh would become a dependent of his brother instead of remaining a jagirdar under the British. So he recommended that the talukas of Bhunga and Wayan be re-transferred to the Kapurthala territory from which they had been detached since 1855. He also recommended that the amount of rupees 1500/- which had been unjustly collected in the form of excise from the territories of Bhunga and Wayan during the last four years under the orders of the late Chief Commissioner should also be given to Suchet Singh.<sup>19</sup> While forwarding this letter to the Government of India, Montgomery the Lieutenant-Governor supported the view-point of the Commissioner. Apart from reproducing some of the arguments of the Commissioner, it was remarked, "The Lieutenant Governor conceives that the particular Chiefship of Kapurthala is entitled to special consideration. The ready cooperation afforded by the Raja during the crisis and the services of the troops under his own leading in Oudh, distinguish him as one of the staunchest of our feudatories and justify the restoration of his principality to its original size inasmuch as it can be effected with the willing consent of his brother and without any expense to the State."<sup>20</sup> His Excellency in Council considered the proposal favourably and ruled that the request of the brothers be complied with. Sanction was accordingly given for the retransfer of talukas of Wayan and Bhunga to Kapurthala State and for the payment of rupees 1500/- to Suchet Singh in lieu of excise money collected by the British.<sup>21</sup> Only three days after the despatch of this order Lord Canning, the Viceroy and Governor-General, paid a personal visit to the Kapurthala State and in the Durbar held at Phagwara on 31st January, 1860, he publicly appre-

19. From Commissioner Trans-Sutlej States to Government of Punjab, No. 209, dated 27th December, 1859, F.P.P., 3rd February, 1860, No. 85.

20. From Government of Punjab to Government of India, No. 17-27, dated 7th January, 1860, *Ibid.*, No. 84.

21. From Government of India to Government of Punjab, No. 243, dated 28th January, 1860, *Ibid.*, No. 86.

ciated the services rendered by Raja Randhir Singh during the 'mutiny' and added, "In consideration of your loyalty I bestow upon you your old estate in the Bari Doab in perpetuity ; and the Will of your late father being set aside your authority is restored in your principality as before including the *ilaqas* of Wayan and Bhunga."<sup>22</sup> The Raja thus got back not only the territories of Wayan and Bhunga but also his ancestral jagirs of the Bari Doab which had been taken by the British on the demise of his father. He had got, in addition, the estates of Boundee and Bithowlee in Oudh<sup>23</sup> together with the title of '*Raja-i-Rajagan*.' He had completely won over the goodwill of the British Government and, like the rulers of Patiala, Nabha and Jind, had the words '*Daulat-i-Englshia*' added to his title of '*Farzand Dilband*.'<sup>24</sup> His brothers also had been fully reconciled. So the case appeared to have been closed once for all.

### III

But actually it was not to be so. In 1866 there was again a quarrel and a more serious quarrel this time between the brothers, for not only Suchet Singh but Bikram Singh also was estranged from the Raja. Since the death of Raja Nihal Singh, Bikram Singh, as mentioned already, had not only been consistently in a state of reconciliation with his brother, Raja Randhir Singh, but had also been appreciative of the generosity of the latter and had even condemned the stand of Suchet Singh in demanding separation of his appanage. During the Revolt of 1857-58, he had also accompanied the Raja to Oudh and had got an estate there as a reward for his services. At long last, as the British authorities had once foreseen, he came to an open rupture with his brother in April 1866 and requested that in accordance with the Will of his late father, his estate of one lakh of rupees be separated from the Kapurthala State. The Commissioner of Trans-Sutlej States, as also the Lieutenant-Governor told him emphatically that the question would not be reopened and the existing arrangement would not be disturbed. Bikram Singh sent repeated representation in support of his claim adding, "the existing state of things has become so intricate

22. Memorandum of Kirpa Ram, the wakil of Raja Randhir Singh, quoted from Griffin, *op. cit.*, p. 519.
23. From Government of India to Chief Commissioner Oudh, No. 2008, dated 15th April, 1859, F.P.P., 15th April 1859, No. 503.
24. From Government of India to Government of Punjab, No. 86, dated 6th March, 1863, F.P.P., March 1863, No. 143.

and inexplicably difficult, the jealousy, bad faith so uniform and progressive, His Highness has become so actively hostile to my happiness and prosperity as not only to make it impossible for me to remain with the Raja but to make it imperatively necessary for me to ask the Government the favour to carry the provision of the Will." The Government of Punjab opposed his claim with a marked firmness and fortitude and whole-heartedly supported the cause of the Raja. So much so that it appeared to be really an issue between Bikram Singh and the Punjab Government, rather than between Bikram Singh and Raja Randhir Singh. That incidentally showed how much ground had been gained by Raja Randhir Singh by this time. Quite an impressive volume of correspondence was exchanged between Bikram Singh and the Punjab Government and each party advanced arguments and counter-arguments in a very forceful language which may very briefly be reproduced as under :

The Punjab Government contended that Bikram Singh had long ago waived all claim to the execution of the Will and the question could not be reopened after a lapse of 15 years, that by choosing to remain with his brother Bikram Singh had enjoyed advantages which he could not otherwise have got, that after 1857 a great change had been brought about in the policy of the British Government which by conferring the right of adoption and in many other ways had evinced a desire scrupulously to maintain integrity of the State, that Her Majesty had conferred on the Raja one of the highest marks of honour, the most exalted order of Star of India and after that it would ill-become His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor to support any proceeding tending to lower the position of the Raja or to bring the existing status of his chiefship into question, that the rule of primogeniture, which had always been applied by Hindu law as well as usage to holdings of this kind, had been authoritatively laid down by the British Government, that Lord Canning had clearly announced in the Darbar of Phagwara in 1860 that the will of the late Raja had been set aside, that Bikram Singh had not been worse off than his brother, Suchet Singh in any way because Raja Randhir Singh had made a generous offer of rupees 54,000 to him including rupees 25,000 or 30,000 worth of land and a cash allowance of rupees 25,000 to descend to his heirs in perpetuity in addition to the estate of Oudh which he continued to enjoy. The Lieutenant-Governor concluded by observing that if the brothers were made independent of the Raja, a bitter spirit would last

through life but if they were made subordinate to the Raja, His Honour ventured to hope, unity would be restored in the family. It was also communicated to Bikram Singh that since his request could not be complied with, he should better cultivate friendly relations with his brother.<sup>25</sup> Bikram Singh, on the other hand, argued that he was entitled to claim the separation of his share from Kapurthala State as an absolute and indefensible right granted to him by the will of his father and confirmed by the Supreme Government, that His Excellency in Council had ruled clearly in their note dated 21st February, 1853, that if differences arose among the brothers, the will would be carried into effect, that he had "always regarded the words contained in Government letters relating to the matter as distinctly and unequivocally containing the charter of my rights," that the advantages which he received were bestowed upon him by the British Government not as a reward for living with the Raja but as "a gracious recompense for the poor services" rendered by him, that no general change of policy can ever be regarded as justifying any violation of a pledge given to an individual, that the rule of primogeniture in accordance with Hindu Law had not been prevalent in the State; that he was economically worse off than his brother, Suchet Singh, despite his fidelity to the Raja, that when the talukas of Bhunga and Wayan were assigned to Suchet Singh, Phagwara had been reserved for him, and finally that by conceding his right "the power, reputation and dignity of the Government would derive much security and lustre because good faith and justice will always fortify the powers of the Government."<sup>26</sup>

25. From Government of Punjab to Government of India, No. 334-610, dated 25th July, 1866, F.P.P., March 1867, No. 135.  
From Government of Punjab to Bikram Singh, No. 487, dated 7th June, 1866, *Ibid.*, No. 136.  
From Government of Punjab to Government of India, No. 486-838, dated 10th November 1866, *Ibid.*, No. 137.  
From Government of Punjab to Agent of Bikram Singh, No. 837, dated 10th November, 1866, *Ibid.*, No. 138.  
From Government of Punjab to Government of India, No. 204-416, dated 20th May, 1867, F.P.P., February 1868, No. 191.  
From Government of Punjab to Bikram Singh, No. 597, dated 5th August, 1867, *Ibid.*, No. 193. Also see K.W., F.P.P., February 1868, Nos. 191-195.
26. From Bikram Singh to Commissioner Jullundur Division and from Commissioner Jullundur Division to Government of Punjab, No. 130, dated 16th May, 1866, F.P.P., March 1867, No. 136.

[Continued on page 311]

Almost simultaneously with Bikram Singh, Suchet Singh also expressed his dissatisfaction with the existing arrangement. In his representation to the Punjab Government, he laid down three grievances. Firstly, the value of his talukas of Bhunga and Wayan had fallen from rupees one lakh to rupees 54,000 under British settlement and whereas in the agreement concluded with Raja Randhir Singh at the time of re-incorporation of the Jagirs in 1860 he had been given permission to raise the *Jama*, that permission had been refused in practice. Secondly, by the said agreement he was to enjoy the revenue power without restrictions, but they were soon afterwards restricted to only summary suits or those instituted within term of one year. Thirdly, in the said agreement signed by the Raja the talukas are to descend to the male heirs lawfully begotten, whereas it had been understood before that all his *aulad* or children were to inherit. Suchet Singh requested the Government that either the conditions of the agreement should be strictly enforced or the agreement should be cancelled and in that eventuality he should be placed in the position which he occupied before the re-incorporation of talukas to the Kapurthala State. He clearly mentioned his preference for compliance of the latter request.<sup>27</sup> The Government of Punjab declined to interfere and returned his repeated appeal on the ground that "the Lieutenant-Governor considers it useless and inexpedient to add to the already large mass of papers which have already been forwarded to His Excellency."<sup>28</sup>

The whole matter came up before the Government of India for decision. It may be noted at once that John Lawrence was the Viceroy and Governor-General of India at that time. He had been absent from India from 1859 to 1863 but he did not appear to have changed his views about Kapurthala State even under the changed circumstances.

*Continued from page 310*

From Agent of Bikram Singh to Government of Punjab, dated 26th October, 1866, *Ibid.*, No. 138.

From Bikram Singh to Government of Punjab, dated 22nd July, 1867, F.P.P., February 1868, No. 192.

Also see K.W., F.P.P., February, 1868, Nos. 191-195.

27. From Suchet Singh to Government of Punjab, dated 26th September, 1867, and from Suchet Singh to Government of India, dated 2nd December, 1867, F.P.P., February, 1868, No. 194.
28. From Government of Punjab to Commissioner Jullundur Division, No. 902, dated 18th November, 1867 and from Commissioner Jullundur Division to Suchet Singh, No 385, dated 26th November, 1867, *Ibid.*



Giving due allowance to the fact that in a case like the one under study it was not easy to give a decision which could satisfy both the parties concerned, one cannot, nonetheless, get rid of the impression that John Lawrence allowed his prejudice to warp his judgement. In flagrant violation of the clearly and emphatically expressed viewpoint of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab and without giving a legitimate chance to Raja Randhir Singh to represent his side of the case, he hastened to give the decision which does him little credit as Viceroy and representative of Her Most Gracious Majesty. He ruled that the brothers had a right to demand partition in accordance with the will of their late father, that the reply given by Lord Canning at the Darbar in 1860 clearly appeared to have related only to a fact namely that the execution of the will was held in abeyance and conveyed no promise that the will would never be carried out, that the considerations of policy could not affect the decision of a plain case of equity, that the rule of primogeniture was not always adhered to in the lesser States of the Punjab, that effect must now be given to the application of both the younger brothers for execution in full of the late Raja's Will. Suchet Singh had already got his separate taluqas and could claim nothing more from the Raja nor could he raise the amount until the expiry of the term of settlements; Bikram Singh should be given territories worth one lakh of rupees per annum from the estate in which it would not be desirable to enforce British assessment; Suchet Singh and Bikram Singh would exercise fiscal, criminal and civil jurisdiction within their respective territories, if however they liked they could come under the suzerainty of the British or that of the Raja; the appanages of the two brothers would descend to their male issues according to the rule of primogeniture and on the failure of male issue lawfully begotten the appanages would revert to the Raja.<sup>29</sup>

The decision came as a 'surprise' to Raja Randhir Singh, as it deprived him not only of his ancestral property but also impaired and lowered his rank as a Chieftain.<sup>30</sup> He, therefore, decided to appeal to the Secretary of State against the decision of the Government of India. Accordingly he requested His Excellency in Council, appeal-

29. From Government of India to Government of Punjab, No. 123, dated 1st Feb. 1868, F.P.P., February 1868, No. 195.

30. From Raja Randhir Singh to Government of India, dated 20th April, 1868, F.P.P., April, 1868, No. 185.

ing to the past relations and the flattering terms in which he had been complimented after the Great Revolt, that the said orders be held in abeyance for six months so as to enable him to make an appeal to Her Majesty's Government. He expressed his readiness to deposit one lakh of rupees as a guarantee of his obeying the orders in case of rejection of his appeal by Her Majesty's Government. He also dispensed a polite and well-worded warning that if his request was not accepted, he would "refuse, however painful the task may be, to comply with the orders of the Government."<sup>31</sup> The Viceroy accepted the request of the Raja.<sup>32</sup> It was also decided that the Raja would pay to his brother, Bikram Singh salary at the rate of rupees 50,000 per annum until the final orders are passed in the case by the Secretary of State.<sup>33</sup>

Raja Randhir Singh now applied his whole energy to the task of preparing a memorial of appeal to be addressed to the Secretary of State against the decision of the Government of India. And this task was not only a difficult but also a delicate one, for he had not only to prepare a cogent case against the claims of his brothers but had also to expose the hollowness of the decision of His Excellency in Council. The natural handicap of the Raja to make a potential case against the verdict of no less an authority than the supreme Government of India needs to be duly appreciated. Nevertheless, the Raja, to his credit, did succeed in preparing a brilliant case for himself and for the integrity of his State. The task of preparing this memorial, which covered 111 printed pages including the attested documents and letters given as appendices, had occupied four months of continuous and hard labour. In its cogent reasonings in defence of the rights of a Raja and in the exhaustive list of documents appended in support of rights, this memorial appears to have had few parallels in the archival literature on British relationship with the Native States.

To his still greater credit, the Raja manoeuvred to convey his memorial in tact to the Secretary of State without giving an opportu-

31. *Ibid.*

32. From Government of India to Government of Punjab, No. 454, dated 28th April, 1868, F.P.P., April 1868, No. 189.

33. From Government of Punjab to Government of India, No. 878-396, dated 8th October, 1868, F.P.P., October 1868, No. 558.

From Raja of Kapurthala to Commissioner Jullundur Division, dated 16th August, 1868, *Ibid.*, No. 559.

From Government of India to Government of Punjab, No. 1271, dated 31st October, *Ibid.*, No. 560.

nity to John Lawrence to bring about any change in it.<sup>34</sup> In this memorial the Raja after giving a brief history of the case supported by relevant documents, adduced the following main arguments for demanding reversal of the decision of the Government of India :

1. That the Kapurthala State is, and was, an independent Chiefship.
2. That by the Hindu Law prevalent among the Chieftains and families of note in the Punjab the whole principality descends to the eldest son and Raja Nihal Singh could not, contrary to Hindu Law and family usage, dispose of any portion of his hereditary estates.
3. That the so-called will of Nihal Singh was only an informal draft, un-attested and un-authenticated, which was submitted to the Punjab Government for approval and had not assumed the shape of a formal attested Will.
4. That supposing the same to be a will, it had been formally annulled by Lord Canning in his speech at Phagwara in 1860.
5. That Bikram Singh and Suchet Singh were illegitimate sons born of a slave women, Nagroo alias Heeran of the potter caste (married to Lungie alias Billee Baba who survived Raja Nihal Singh). She was purchased as a slave girl many years ago, and as such the two sons from her had no legal right to succeed to portions of the State.
6. That even admitting Bikram Singh and Suchet Singh had legal rights, the same were finally renounced by them.
7. That having regard to the period of time which had been allowed to elapse since he was put into full possession as rightful owner of the principality, the interference of the Viceroy, complained of, was clearly inequitable and unjust.
8. That at all events, the authority conferred by the Viceroy on Bikram Singh and Suchet Singh to exercise civil, criminal and fiscal jurisdiction was in subversion of, and in derogation to, his clear rights as the Raja.
9. That in the decision of the Viceroy itself the appanages of the two brothers are declared descendible according to the rule of primogeniture which showed that for the due maintenance of a principality the idea of division must be excluded.<sup>35</sup>

34. For details see Arora, A.C., *op. cit.*, pp. 159-160.

35. Memorial from Raja Randhir Singh of Kapurthala to Secretary of State for India, dated 4th September, 1868, F.P.P., October 1868, No. 329.

When the Raja sent supplementary appeal containing some more informations to be forwarded to the Secretary of State,<sup>36</sup> the Governor-General in Council said in the forwarding remarks that the statements furnished were 'absolutely worthless' and were at best "a mere effort on the part of the Raja to prop up his case at the last moment."<sup>37</sup>

Kanwar Bikram Singh and Kanwar Suchet Singh sent a counter-appeal to the Secretary of State in defence of their claim and for upholding the decision of His Excellency in Council. Briefly speaking, they contended that the rule of primogeniture in accordance with the Hindu Law was not universally observed in the Chiefships under the rule of the Sikhs and that the Will and pleasure of the ruler was generally the law of the land, that Raja Nihal Singh in accordance with the general usage had the right to execute the will, that the will had been confirmed and re-affirmed by the British, that they were not illegitimate sons as their mother had been duly married to their father, Nihal Singh by the practice of *Chadar-dalna* and Nihal Singh always regarded her as his second wife, that they had not waived their rights under the will when they were majors and the younger brothers despite the agreement he signed had already recovered his portion, and, finally, that Lord Canning had only held the will in abeyance and had not annulled it, indeed, he was not competent to do so.<sup>38</sup>

The Secretary of State in Council considered the representations of both the parties as also the decision of the Government of India. It was obviously very difficult for them to give a final verdict which could satisfy both, rather all the three, parties. If the verdict went in favour of the Raja it would not only be construed as constituting injustice to the other two brothers but would also involve the question of over-ruling the decision of the Government of India. On the other hand, if the claims of the two younger brothers were upheld, that would, of course, satisfy them as also the Viceroy, but would, as far

36. From Raja of Kapurthala to Government of India, dated 9th November, 1868, F.P.P., December 1868, No. 180.

From Raja Randhir Singh of Kapurthala to Secretary of State for India, dated 9th November, 1868, *Ibid.*, No. 181.

37. From Government of India to Secretary of State for India, No. 219, dated 11th December, 1868, F.P.P., December 1868, No. 183.

38. From Sirdars Bikram Singh and Suchet Singh to Secretary of State for India, dated nil F.P.P., December 1868 No. 112. From Govt of India to Secretary of State for India, No. 215, dated 9th December, 1868, *Ibid.*, No. 113.

as could be foreseen, perpetually alienate the Raja. The Secretary of State in Council under the circumstances did not appear to have bothered about probing into the legal aspects of the case. In arriving at the verdict they were obviously actuated rather by political considerations. As the decision of the Governor-General in Council had been against the spirit of that benign policy which Her Majesty's Government deliberately and declaredly intended to adopt towards the Native Princes, it was over-ruled to effect a return to the said policy. It was, therefore, decreed that Raja Randhir Singh should remain in full possession of the sovereignty of the entire State and that the two younger brothers should receive in money, or in a life tenure of lands, the full value of the shares assigned to them in their father's will but in regard to criminal jurisdiction they were to be held in entire subordination to the Raja.<sup>39</sup> When this decision was communicated to the Government of India, John Lawrence had already been replaced by Lord Mayo and under the new regime the verdict of the Secretary of State in Council could be executed honestly, scrupulously and in the manner favourable to the Raja.<sup>40</sup> It was ruled by His Excellency in Council on the recommendation of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab that each of the two younger brothers should be given a cash allowance of rupees 60,000 or 50,000 per annum, as it would not be right or proper to assign lands to either of them and that the matter should be regarded as finally settled.<sup>41</sup> Thus after various ups and downs the Kapurthala Will Case came to an end and merged itself in the long run into the integrity of the State.

From the above study the following significant conclusions may be deduced :

Firstly, the British as Paramount Power considered it their right, under the Company as well as under the Crown, to decide the question of succession of Kapurthala State, as indeed that of numerous other Native States. Though this right finds no place in any of *sanads* or agreements pertaining to the State, yet it was never challenged, in theory or practice, by the concerned parties at any stage of the case.

39. From Secretary of State for India to Govt. of India, No. 27, dated 12th February, 1869, F.R.R., April 1869, No. 101.

40. Cf. Arora, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

41. From Govt. of Punjab to Govt. of India, No. 223-709, dated 16th July, 1869, F.P.P., September 1869, No. 227.

From Govt. of India to Govt of Punjab, No. 1272, dated 9th September, 1869, *Ibid.*, No. 229.

Raja Nihal Singh had sent his will to the Punjab Government for approval. After his death, Raja Randhir Singh and his two younger brothers sent repeated representations to the British authorities for setting aside the will or for upholding it, but each party did recognise throughout the case the right of the Paramount Power to decide the matter. Bikram Singh and Suchet Singh, of course, did assert in support of their claim that Lord Canning had no right to set aside the will. But by this they only meant that once the will had been confirmed and reaffirmed by the British authorities, it could not legally be set aside. The Secretary of State for India while asserting the right of the Paramount Power decreed that Lord Canning had annulled the will as he had a right to do so. Raja Randhir Singh at one stage had threatened that he might refuse to comply with the order of the Government of India, however, painful the task might be. But this did not imply that he was challenging the right of the British authorities to decide the question. He only wanted to get permission for appealing to the Secretary of State against the decision of the Governor-General in Council which he considered to be flagrantly unjust. The marked enthusiasm which he displayed and the great labour which he put in for preparing his memorial of appeal to the Secretary of State, simply demonstrated the loyal and unflinching faith which he had in the right of the Paramount Power to decide the matter of succession. There is no doubt that with the grant of the right of adoption to Kapurthala as to the other States and the establishment of the rule of primogeniture, the Paramount Power was left with very little authority to determine the question of succession. But still in cases of conflict, as in the present one, the Paramount Power did have the indisputable right to give its ruling.

Secondly, the Kapurthala State was not treated on equal footing with other Sikh States by the British authorities and the will of late Raja Nihal Singh was said to be the cause of that. It may be mentioned that in May 1858 the Phulkian Chiefs of Patiala, Nabha and Jind had sent a paper of eight requests to the British authorities, their sixth request being, "the British Government should bind itself never to interfere on behalf of relatives, connections and dependants of the Chiefs."<sup>42</sup> The Government of India accepted this request as a principle,

42. From Commissioner Cis-Sutlej States to Chief Commissioner Punjab, No. 149, dated 20th May, 1858, F.P.P., 27th May, 1859, No. 85.

adding that they would interfere only if it was very imperative to do so.<sup>43</sup> Bikram Singh and Suchet Singh claimed that the Raja of Kapurthala had been excluded from the same privilege chiefly on account of their opposition and on that plea they demanded the intervention of the Supreme Government in the will case.<sup>44</sup> Their opposition might have been one of the factors for not conceding the said privilege to the Kapurthala Chief and the will certainly furnished the British authorities with a legitimate excuse to interfere in defence of the claims of the younger brothers. But it was not the only cause, not even an important cause, of treating Kapurthala as inferior to the Phulkian States. The real cause is to be found in the general policy of the British authorities to treat the Native States in order of their importance, taking also into consideration the record of their loyalty to the Paramount Power. The Phulkian Chiefships in the judgment of the British Government were more important and deserved better treatment. It will be relevant and significant to note in this connection that in September 1864 the Government of Punjab had recommended to the Government of India that Kapurthala should have precedence over Jind, arguing that the former had more population, more revenues and had always been more influential than the latter.<sup>45</sup> But His Excellency in Council did not agree with this opinion and ruled that the Raja of Jind was entitled to rank higher among the ruling chiefs than the Raja of Kapurthala, holding that the former had sovereign powers within his State whereas the latter did not possess the power of life and death over his own subjects.<sup>46</sup>

Thirdly, the attitude adopted by the British authorities with regard to Kapurthala Will Case in particular and towards Kapurthala State in general, differed from Governor-General to Governor-General. Lord Dalhousie, a rank imperialist under the East India Company, favoured the partition of Kapurthala State as provided in

43. From Government of India to Government of Punjab, No. 3047, dated 25th May, 1859, *Ibid.*, No. 87.

44. From Bikram Singh to Government of Punjab, dated 22nd July, 1867, F.P.P., February, 1868, No. 192.  
From Suchet Singh to Government of Punjab, dated 26th September, 1867, *Ibid.*, No. 194.

45. From Government of Punjab to Government of India, No. 664-477, dated 5th September, 1864., F.P.P., November 1864, No. 163.

46. From Government of India to Government of Punjab, No. 490, dated 15th September, 1864, *Ibid.*, No. 166.

the Will and he it was who, on the recommendation of John Lawrence, the Chief Commissioner, decreed the separation of Suchet Singh's appanage and brought his estate under the jurisdiction of the British. Lord Canning, the first Viceroy under the Crown, on the other hand, was favourably inclined towards upholding the rights of the Raja and maintaining the integrity of his State. It was, of course, due to the 'great and very timely services' which the Raja rendered to the British Government during the Great Revolt, as also due to the new policy which had been declared towards the Native Princes by the historic Queens' Proclamation. The Clemency Viceroy set aside the Will and conferred, in addition, rewards and honours upon the Raja. John Lawrence even under the changed circumstances was deliberately averse to the integrity of the Kapurthala State and paid but a very scant consideration to the rights, dignity and honour of the Raja. He appeared to have been consistently hostile to the State and its Raja, alike as a member of Board of Administration, as Chief Commissioner and as Viceroy. In contravention of the clear and emphatic opinion of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Panjab, he once more decreed the partition of the Kapurthala State. But his verdict could not prevail, thanks to the Herculean efforts made by the Raja for maintaining the integrity of his State and the considerate and cautious policy of Her Majesty's Government towards the Native Princes.



## Communalism in the Punjab : The Ahmadiyah versus the Arya Samaj during the Lifetime of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad

SPENCER LAVAN\*

The importance of the Āryā Samāj movement to the religious spectrum of northern India in the years after 1875 has recently been explored and documented in several places.<sup>1</sup> The role of this Hindū revivalist movement in the life of Ahmadiyah Islām is certainly worthy of study, although from the point of view of Āryā literature, encounters with the Ahmadiyah have scarcely been mentioned and have been considered, most likely, of little significance.<sup>2</sup> It is therefore not unfair to say that the role of the Āryā Samāj in the Punjāb from 1875 to 1910 loomed far more significant in the eye of the outside observer than did the role of the Ahmadiyah movement. The reason for this is fairly clear; for while the two movements had a great deal in their common "Hindū" or "Islamic" responses to the age in which they emerged, they had one major difference. Some members of the Āryā Samāj entered public and political life in the Punjāb after 1884 and

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1. This essay is written as a complement to that of Professor Kenneth Jones of Kansas State University whose article, "Communalism in the Punjab: The Arya Samaj Contribution," appeared in Vol. XXVIII, Number 1, November 1968, pp. 39-54. Our purpose here is to describe the Ahmadiyah point of view on many of the same events with which Professor Jones was concerned. On this point, see two unpublished Ph. D. dissertations: (1) Kenneth Jones, *The Arya Samaj in the Punjab: A Study in Social Reform and Religious Revivalism*, University of California, Berkeley, 1966 and (2) J. Reid Graham, *The Arya Samaj as a Reformation in Hinduism With Special Reference to Caste*, Yale University, 1942. See also, Charles Heimsath, *Indian Nationalism and Hindu Social Reform* and the earlier works of J. N. Farquhar, Griswold and H. M. Clark which dealt with the Āryā Samāj from a Christian missionary point of view. One should also note the Āryā Samāj's own voluminous outpouring and especially Lajpat Rai's *History of the Arya Samaj*.
2. The only study of the Āryā Samāj which pursues this question is that of Jones. This is done principally in the case of Lekh Rām who receives detailed but not comprehensive attention with respect to his relations to Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad, founder of the Ahmadiyah movement.

acted continuously in opposition to the British. Mirza Ghulām Aḥmad, self-proclaimed Messiah and *Mahdī* and founder of the Aḥmadiyah, throughout his career, professed his loyalty to the crown and urged his followers through such public media as *al-Hakam* to avoid political agitation or anti-British activity.<sup>3</sup>

The first awareness of the Āryā Samāj and its programme must have come to Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad in his home village of Qādiyān during Swamī Dayanānd's whirlwind tour of the Punjab in 1877. His previous attempts to set up chapters of the Āryā Samāj as an organization in other parts of India had not succeeded. But, Dayanānd certainly seems to have arrived in the Punjab at the right moment. His lecturing and public discussions met both with strong opposition and strong support from the first. Of those in the latter category, some immediately responded to his call to reform Hinduism by throwing idols into the Ravi River. The combination of these overtly destructive actions and Dayanānd's militant preaching against orthodox Hinduism created an uproar in the Hindū community of Lāhore and forced many Hindūs to take a position about Dayanānd quite early. Dayanānd's appeal to the younger intellectuals of the Punjab was quite successful although the transplanted Bengālī Brahmo Samāj had succeeded only slightly.

A brief comparison of Swamī Dayanānd and Ghulām Aḥmad provides some interesting parallel data about the two men. Both were raised in upper class families; both received traditional religious training; both repudiated certain worldly ties which their families sought to thrust upon them; both, in a sense, withdrew from the mainstream of life for a time, yet neither chose to follow the traditional path of the *sanyasīn* or *ṣūfī*. Both Dayanānd and Aḥmad saw the degeneration to which their respective religious communities had fallen and each sought to reconstruct his faith in terms that would speak to the modern late nineteenth century Indian while harking back for authority to the original Scriptural source, the *Qurān* or the *Vedas*. Each wanted to defend his renewed faith against the "threats" of the

3. See *al-Hakam*, the first major Aḥmadiyah weekly newspaper in such issues as March 13, 1898, quoted in *Selections from the Vernacular Press of the Punjab* (hereafter S.V.N.P.) Vol. XI; p. 238; May 17, 1900, *ibid.*, XIII, p. 276; June 10, 1900, *ibid.*, p. 323; July 9, 1900, *ibid.*, p. 391; January 17, 1902, *ibid.*, XV, pp. 67-68; March 10, 1903, *ibid.*, XVI, pp. 63-64; September 18, 1908, *ibid.*, XXI, pp. 588-589, as examples.

other and the Christian missionaries. The major differences between the two men were (1) Aḥmad's claim to be Messiah and *mahdī*, i.e., something more than an ordinary *mujaddid* (a religious reformer), where Dayanānd never made such a claim, even if he was held in very high esteem by his followers; (2) Dayanānd's repudiation of British and European domination in Indian life which led in the 1890's to the Āryā Samāj's increasing role in the political life of Indian nationalism which contrasted sharply with Aḥmad's view that India had never fared better than it had under British rule; and (3) the fact that Dayanānd did not succeed in organizing the Āryā Samāj in his native area but did succeed in transplanting it to the soil of the Punjab, while Aḥmad, a native Punjābī, did succeed in starting his movement for Islamic renewal at about the same time in his native province, later spreading it to other parts of India and the world as well.

## II

Ghulām Aḥmad's first real encounter with the Āryā Samāj came in his relations with one Sharampt Rāi, a Qādiyānī, who was Secretary of the local chapter of the Āryā Samāj in Aḥmad's home village. A.R. Dard has reported that it had fifteen members.<sup>4</sup> Before publication of his *magnum opus*, *Barāhīn-i-Aḥmadiyah*, relations with neighbouring Āryās seem to have been reasonable enough. Although Aḥmad clearly had no face-to-face meeting or even indirect relations with Dayanānd, his biographer reports that by a registered letter, dated April 20, 1883, Aḥmad offered to send Dayanānd copies of the *Barāhīn* and to debate with him the superiority of Islām, Dayanānd never answered the letter. During August 1883, Aḥmad reportedly had a vision that the end of Dayanānd was drawing near. Suddenly the *swamī* fell ill at the end of September and died at the end of October.<sup>5</sup>

4. Dard *Life of Ahmad*, Vol. 1, Sultan Brothers Lahore, 1949, p. 62. Since the Qādiyān chapter was not founded until 1887, ten years after the one at Lāhore, and since Aḥmad was already engaged in serious controversy with the Samāj in 1885 and 1886 following the publication of the *Barāhīn-i-Aḥmadiyah*, we must assume that Sharampat Rai joined the original Gurdaspur branch founded by Dayanand in 1878, or, possibly, the one at Batala founded in 1882.
5. Dard, p. 82. No other Aḥmadiyah source mentions this "revelation" which in the light of future prophecies concerning the death of Lekh Rām and 'Abd Allāh 'Aṣim should have been significant if Aḥmad had really foreseen Dayānānd's death and proclaimed it publicly. For details on Dayānānd's last days, see H. B. Sarda, *op. cit.*, pp. 311-336.

If Dayanānd's writings<sup>6</sup> were offensive to Muslims in general and to Aḥmad in particular during the first few years the Samāj was in existence in the Punjab, Aḥmad was certainly even more surprised by the blatant attacks on Muslim feelings offered by the Āryā, Pandit Lekh Rām who first wrote to Aḥmad from Amritsar on April 3, 1885, that he would like to come to Qādiyān to see Aḥmad perform Heavenly signs.<sup>7</sup> It was thus that a relationship which started on a note of taunting sarcasm in personal correspondence between two men would end in the murder of one twelve years later leading to sharp communal tension.

Who was Lekh Rām and why should he have played such a major part in the early life of the Samāj as well as in the religious controversies in which Aḥmad was engaged? In contrast to the other young leaders of the new Āryā Samāj, Lekh Rām did not come to Lāhore to be educated or to take part in the new awakening going on there. He was born in the village of Sayyidpūr, in the Jhlum district, of a Sarsūt Brahmin family in the year 1858.<sup>8</sup>

Lekh Rām received his first education at the village *madrasah* where he studied Urdū. When he was eleven, he moved to Peshāwar where his uncle served with the local police force. There he studied Urdū and Persian with Muslim tutors to whom he reacted negatively. He even engaged them in religious debates and may have developed much of his later animosity towards Islām and Muslims from this brief adolescent experience. At the age of fourteen, he returned to his home village where he studied under a Hindū until he terminated his education at the age of seventeen, fluent in Urdū, Persian and Panjābī.<sup>9</sup> Lekh Rām then returned to Peshāwar where he joined the police force towards the end of 1875. He served nearly four years during which time his increased interest in religious activities continued to conflict with his police duties, the more so because his superior officer was a Muslim. During these years he studied *Gurūmukhī* and learned of the *Bhagavad-Gita* from a Sikh; he became a devotee of Kṛṣṇa for a time and finally met Kanhāiyālāl Alakhadhari, one of Dayanānd's

6. Especially his *Satyārth Prakāśh* or *Light of Truth* which harshly attacked Muslims, Christians and Sikhs.

7. Dard, p. 84.

8. Jones, p. 81.

9. Ram Chandra Javed, *Āryā Samāj ke Mahā Purush*, University Publishing, Jullundār, 1954, pp. 60-62, cited from Jones, p. 81.

original Panjābī supporters who introduced him to Āryā Samājī doctrine. When a chapter of the Samāj was founded at Peshāwar in 1880, Lekh Rām not only used its library but soon travelled to Ajmer to hear the *swamī* speak. From this time onwards, Lekh Rām accepted Dayanānd as his personal Guru although he did not involve himself with the mainstream of the movement at Lāhore until after Dayanānd's death.<sup>10</sup>

*Sat Dharm Prachārak*, the newspaper of the militant faction of the Āryā Samāj after the split in 1893, published a short biography of Lekh Rām two months after his assassination. After covering much of the material mentioned above, the writer described Lekh Rām's initial involvement with the Samāj.

He at once sent for his (Dayanand's) works and read them with great zest. These created an insatiable desire to see in person the much belauded Swami. At last in 1881 he obtained leave of absence for one month when, after establishing the Arya Samaj at Peshawar, he set off to see the Swami, whom he met Ajmer...<sup>11</sup>

After returning home, a vigorous supporter of the Samāj but still a Government servant,

he showed great independence of spirit in discussing religious questions with men of influence and his superiors in rank. At this time he convened a large meeting at which the evils of intemperance were denounced.

In this meeting all the District Officials and the Commanding Officer of the Station took part. Pandit Lekh Ram's speech made a great impression on the minds of the European soldiers.<sup>12</sup>

In spite of this glowing description of Lekh Rām's impression upon men of differing persuasions, "he could never pull with bigoted officials" and finally after several years of conflict, he resigned his police post in November of 1884. It was then that he went to Lāhore to join with the other new leaders of the Āryā Samāj, still stunned by the death of Dayanand and still discussing what directions the Āryā Samāj should now take. In Lāhore, Lekh Rām became editor

10. Jambuthanan, *Swāmī Shraddhanand*, pp. 14-18.

11. *S.V.N.P.*, X, No. 24, p. 442, *Sat Dharm Prachārak*, May 21, 1897. Since no other available source gives Lekh Rām credit for founding the Peshāwar branch, we may assume this statement to be one of obituary credit to build up his role and person at a time when communal tension was high.

12. *Ibid.*

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of the *Arya Gazette*, "which was then the only weekly paper published in vernacular," by the *Āryā Samāj*.<sup>13</sup>

### III

Although Ghulām Aḥmad and Lekh Rām had first conflicted in correspondence during 1885 when Lekh Rām was at Amritsar and later when he was at Qādiyān, their most serious conflict did not occur until February 20, 1893, when Aḥmad prophesied that Lekh Rām would die within six years.<sup>14</sup> Before this, however, Aḥmad had engaged in more local controversies with *Āryā Samājīs*. One of these debates occurred at Hoshiarpūr with an *Āryā* named Murlidhar during March of 1886. The Aḥmadiyah report of this debate in which the *Āryā* began with an attack on the Shaq al-Qamar miracle in the *Qur'ān* ended in an uproar when Murlidhar left the debate before Aḥmad finished his final presentation. Disruptions by Murlidhar took up much of the time of the second meeting when the Aryan spent more than an hour, not in explaining and vindicating the position of the Samaj, but in pointing out that Aḥmad had raised two questions instead of one. Aḥmad removed his misunderstanding, and then took three hours in writing his answer, which was even then not complete . . . he neither completed his answer nor handed over the written portion to Aḥmad for reply; and instead of finishing the debate as previously arranged, he left the meeting, as before, under an excuse that he had to attend another meeting of the Samaj.<sup>15</sup>

In September of 1886, Aḥmad published his second major work dealing with the *Āryā Samāj*, *Surma-i-Chashm-i-Āryā*, in which a detailed report of the debates at Hoshiarpūr was recorded. Very much in the spirit in which Dayanānd and his followers were attempting to employ concepts of reason and science to validate their otherwise "fundamentalist" approach to the *Vedas*, so also Aḥmad chose to devote most of this work to show that such a miracle as the rending of the moon in the *Qur'ān* presented no real conflict with science as

13. *Ibid.*, p. 443. This statement is also incorrect if taken generally, correct if meant to refer to the *Āryā Samāj*. According to Javed, the *Gazette* was published from Ferozpur, a fact corroborated by *S.V.N.P.* reports.

14. Dard, pp. 84-85; for details of their relationship based on Aḥmad's "*Istiftā*" of 1897, see p. 11 below.

15. Dard, pp. 112-113.

"no one has yet exhausted the knowledge of the working of nature."<sup>16</sup> There is no proof or reason to suppose that nature is uniform, Aḥmad went on to argue. Thus miracles may be understood as being of four kinds : (1) intellectual (2) scientific (3) spiritual blessings (4) apparent inference with known laws of nature. The final section of the book was an invitation to the Āryā Samāj to join in the comparative study of the *Vedas* and *Qur'ān*. Typically, Aḥmad offered a prize to anyone who would produce a book in the next three months proving the superiority of the *Vedas* over the *Qur'ān*. If there was no response, or, if the Āryā Samāj did not stop vilifying Islām, Aḥmad asserted that he would have to turn to *mubāhilla*<sup>17</sup> in defense of Islām.<sup>18</sup>

If the Āryā Samāj responded, it was by the decision of the Gūrdās-pūr Samāj in 1890, to hire a full time *updeshak* or preacher whose job it would be to tour the villages and towns of the district, according to a report in the *Lāhore Tribune*.<sup>19</sup> During the period from 1886-1890 the Samāj had, in general, been strongly critical of Christianity and orthodox Hinduism. In 1888, Samājī Guru Datt launched a campaign against the Sikhs. Among those who joined him in attacking both Gurū Nānak and Gurū Gobind Singh was Lekh Rām. Sikh reaction against the Āryās was passionate in spite of the later denials which appeared in the Sikh press when Aḥmad wrote his *Sat Bachon* proving that Gurū Nānak was a Muslim. In 1889, the situation was a potentially explosive one in Lāhore as well as other Punjāb areas.<sup>20</sup>

It was after 1890 that the Āryā Samāj clash with Islām became more and more significant. In his recent study of Āryā Samāj history, Kenneth Jones cites the rise of the Aḥmadīyah as well as a growing concern among Āryās over the issue of cow slaughter as factors which precipitated this new dimension in Āryā Samāj polemics. Lekh Rām was the chief spokesman on the issues of cow protection, the promotion of Hindi in Government schools and in writing propaganda against the Aḥmadīyah. In addition to doing missionary work for

16. *Ibid.*, p. 116.

17. The word "Mubahilla" comes from the Arabic root by meaning "to curse". The form employed here means a debating contest between proponents of two opposing religious positions. When such debates reached a point from which neither side could withdraw, the opponents would call down the curses of God on each other and often make dire predictions about their opponents.

18. Dard, pp. 116-117.

19. Jones, p. 132, from the *Tribune*, July 23, 1890; September 6, 1890, p. 4.

20. Jones, p. 135.

the Āryās, Lekh Rām began writing a series of tracts in which he attacked Islam and especially the anti-Āryā writings of Aḥmad.<sup>21</sup>

As Lekh Rām remained editor of the *Āryā Gazette* until 1890, he was also able to use this as a vehicle for venting his wrath against Islām. His knowledge of Persian and Arabic was probably superior to that of any other Samāj leader, and, with this unusual background, he was able to gather around him other Āryā Samājīs whose knowledge of Islamic theology and philosophy complemented his own.<sup>22</sup> Evidences from his writings, as well as Aḥmad's, indicate that each was certainly well versed in the Scriptures and traditions of the other's faith even if each generally seized on a point which could be subjected to questionable interpretation.

That Lekh Rām's reputation for militancy was already spreading throughout the Indian Muslim community was apparent from an article appearing in the Dehlī paper, *Akmāl al-Akhhbār* which noted on March 21, 1890, that the *mawlawīs* of Bombay had requested Lekh Rām of Amritsar to turn over the copies of a work (not specified) in which "he has wounded the religious feelings of Muhammadans by using disrespectful language in criticizing their religion and its founder." At the same time the *Akmāl* sought to put the blame on "British liberty" for making people "indifferent in religious matters" and irresponsible as well. The Bombay group even went so far as to threaten a law suit against Lekh Rām.<sup>23</sup> During the years from 1890 to 1893 the split between the "conservatives" and "radicals" in the Āryā Samāj began to widen. Lekh Rām, Lālā Munshī Rām, and Lālā Ralla Rām led the radical group, now calling itself the Sanathan Dharma Sabha, in an ever wider chain of preaching and press propaganda in areas not before reached by the Āryā Samāj.<sup>24</sup>

Lekh Rām's pamphlet, written in 1892, *Jehad or the Basis of Mohammedi Religion*, was especially offensive to Muslims of all shades.<sup>25</sup> In this tract, he began with a sharp attack against the "naturalists" or followers of Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān who were always trying . . . to prove unnecessarily and wrongly that Islam never

21. See Jones, *J.A.S.* Vol. XXVIII, No. 1, November 1968, p. 51, for details.

22. Jones (dissertation), p. 38.

23. *S.V.N.P.*, III, No. 14, p. 123, *Akmāl al-Akhhbār*, Delhī, March 21, 1890; see also *Tribune*, May 3, 1890, cited by Jones, p. 163.

24. Jones, p. 162.

25. Lekh Rām, *Risala-i-Jihād, Yā'ni Dīn-i-Muḥammadī Kī Bunyād*, Lāhore, 1892.



indulged in Jihad and the people were never converted to Islam forcibly . . . Temples were (not) demolished nor were cows ever slaughtered in the temples. Women and children belonging to other religious sects were never forcibly converted to Islam nor did they ever commit any sexual acts with them as could have been done with slaves—males and females both.<sup>26</sup>

Well read in Arabic, Persian and Urdū history as well as in *Qur'ān*, Lekh Rām brought together every major story of an atrocity committed in the political history of Islām giving special emphasis to the invasion of India by Maḥmūd of Ghaznī and other Muslims.<sup>27</sup>

With these remarks, Lekh Rām did little more than raise the ire of the entire Muslim community—Sunnī, Aḥmadī, 'Alīgarh. Even the Christian Missionary paper *Nūr-i-Afshān*, whose editorial policy was not usually calculated to smooth over communal tensions, agreed with *Paysāh Akhbār* that a pamphlet such as Lekh Rām's was "calculated to intensify the feelings of hostility existing between the members of the two communities." *Paysāh Akhbār* went on to chide several other Āryā publications for similar tactics as well.<sup>28</sup> Issues of the *Tribune* and *Bhārat Sudhār* in late August as well as one of the *Sirmūr Gazette* published September 23, 1892, all threatened civil action against Lekh Rām if he did not desist from his anti-Muslim crusade.<sup>29</sup> *Akhbār-i-Nūr* of Ludhiāna likened his writings to those of the Christian missionaries which had also insulted Muslims. In response, the author quoted from European and American writers whose views of Islām showed

its propagation by the sword is untrue, and that the original leaders of Islam were far more tolerant and generous to those whom they conquered, and who differed from them in their religious beliefs, than were the Christian conquerors in similar circumstances.<sup>30</sup>

#### IV

The growth of the Āryā Samāj between 1877 and 1891 was

26. *Ibid.*, p. 1.

27. *Ibid.*, pp. 43-46.

28. *S.V.N.P.* V, No. 29, p. 219. from *Paysāh Akhbār*, July 11, 1892.

29. *Tribune*, August 24, 1892, p. 4; also *S.V.N.P.*, V, No. 33, p. 296, *Bhārat Sudhār*, August 27, 1892; also *ibid.*, No. 40, p. 372, September, 23, 1892.

30. *S.V.N.P.*, VII, No. pp. 212-213, *Akhbār-i-Nūr-un-Alā Nūr*, Ludhiāna, May 14, 1894.

significant enough to be encouraging to the Samāj and annoying to the Muslim community. 16,275 members were recorded for the Punjāb in 1891 with almost 2,500 in Lāhore and more than 2,000 in Dera Ghazī Khān districts, the two largest.<sup>31</sup> Growth proved to be a partial source of the conflict the Samāj was experiencing both within and without its organization.

During this period of internal strife within the Āryā Samāj over such issues at vegetarianism, relations between Lekh Rām and Ghulām Aḥmad had also continued to deteriorate. Following their original correspondence in April of 1885 in which Lekh Rām had asked to come to Qādiyān so that he could see some "heavenly signs," relations grew more acrimonious when Lekh Rām insisted that Aḥmad should deposit 2400 rupees in an account beforehand. If the heavenly sign should not come true Lekh Rām would receive the money. Aḥmad, believing Lekh Rām not to be a leader of the Samāj and to be purposely insulting him, asked Lekh Rām on July 17, 1885, to deposit a like amount with the pledge that he would forfeit it if he did not become a Muslim after seeing the "heavenly sign." In answer, Lekh Rām is reported to have said that by "heavenly sign" he meant that Aḥmad should cause the sun to shine in the East. Aḥmad's only response was to invite Lekh Rām to Qādiyān for a face to face confrontation.<sup>32</sup>

It appears that Lekh Rām came to Qādiyān in mid-November of 1885 in an attempt to organize the Hindūs there. Although he remained in Qādiyān at least a month, he and Aḥmad never met. Aḥmad records the details of an exchange of letters between them in his post-mortem *Istiftā'* whose purpose was both to vindicate Aḥmad from any implication in the murder of Lekh Rām and also to prove the validity of his 1893 prophecy thāt Lekh Rām would die within six years.<sup>33</sup>

Lekh Rām obviously did not take the prophecy seriously at the time. Although Ghulām Aḥmad had attracted attention outside of Qādiyān and even outside of the Muslim community where *fatwās* had already been issued against him in 1890 and 1891, he had not attracted the kind of attention he would the day after Lekh Rām's assassination. If prophecy was one way to strike back at the insults heaped upon Islām by a militant Āryā Samājī such as Lekh Rām, another approach

31. Jones, p. 171.

32. Dard, pp. 84-85.

33. "*Istiftā'*," Qādiyān, 1897; English translation by A. Ghazi and S. Lavan, Montreal, McGill University, 1970.

was to attack the Āryā position on women and sexual relationships, an attack always certain to raise the ire of opponents. As a strict follower of the *Code of Manu*, Dayanānd had accepted the passages (9:56ff.) which allowed both the possibility of widow remarriage or the practice of *niyog* as an alternative. In his chapter on family life in the *Satyārth Prākāsh*, Dayanānd spelled out the distinction between remarriage and *niyog*. Dayanānd made it clear, however, that *niyog* was to be performed only by widows and widowers but not between "bachelors and virgins."<sup>34</sup> As the *Vedas* had specifically prohibited remarriages, Dayanānd developed this more complete doctrine of *niyog* as an answer to the practice of *satī* or widow burning in the modern age. As a doctrine, it was clearly one more attempt he was making to place Indian family life in a more modern context.

Aḥmad's response came in one of his strongest tracts, *Radd-i-Niyog*, or the *Rejection of Niyog*, published at Qādiyān, November 1895. Beginning the pamphlet by addressing Muḥammad as "*khatm nabiya*,"<sup>35</sup> he described the prophet's marital relations and compared them to the practice of *niyog* which he had read about in *Satyārth Prākāsh*. Repudiating Dayanānd's answers about *niyog*, Aḥmad asked, why a childless couple could not simply adopt a child of the same caste? Why should a widow not remarry and bind herself to one man? "If not, then she is loose, living with as many men as she wishes"<sup>36</sup> The practice of *niyog* was nothing more than an excuse for transgressing what the *Vedas* forbid—remarriage. Aḥmad felt it his responsibility via an *ishtihār* and this tract to urge the Āryās to give up this "shameful practice." Their response to his first *ishtihār* was to publish anonymous abuses from Jullundar. In response, Aḥmad offered 500 rupees to anyone who could disprove his position on *niyog*.<sup>37</sup>

What would the Islamic answer to the problem of widow remarriage be, Aḥmad asked? Islamic law required that a widow stay at home for four months after the death of her husband in order to avoid

34. *Satyārth Prākāsh*, pp. 165-166.

35. This is an important point because many Muslims accused Aḥmad of claiming the "prophecy" due to his use of the term of *nabī* when describing himself as Promised Messiah and *Mahdī*.

36. *Radd-i-Niyog*, Qādiyān (?), 1895, p. 4; see also Dard's brief discussion, pp. 330-332.

37. *Radd-i-Niyog*, p. 6.

any illicit encounters too soon. In this, he saw a sensible legal approach to the problem, for if a widow was free to have intercourse at once, how could one determine if the child was of the first or second husband. Aḥmad's arguments and proofs were lengthy. Their significance was more in the style and language of Aḥmad's argumentation against this Āryā doctrine and the obvious tensions which it would provoke both in Hindū-Muslim relations and, more specifically, in Aḥmadīyah-Āryā Samāj relations than in any effectiveness Aḥmad might really have had in winning the Āryās over to Islām.

Lekh Rām's activities during the years after 1893 were especially notable because he was not only contributing to the growth of communal tensions in the Panjāb as an Ārayā, "but because he was by far the most successful."<sup>38</sup> His preaching which was offensive to Muslims was now, also, to Sikhs during the same period in which Aḥmad's claim that Gurū Nānak was a Muslim was also creating a public issue. In late August of 1896, *Paysah Akhbār* protested against Lekh Rām's book *Ṭakzīb-i-Barāhīn* as not merely an answer to Aḥmad's *Barāhīn* but a book which

has used the most offensive and insulting language towards Islam, its leaders, its followers, including the Prophets, and things held sacred by the Muhammadans.

Citing the case of another book suppressed by the authorities in Bombay, the editor called on the authorities in the Panjāb to do the same with this book. *Chaudhwin Śadī* of Rāwalpindī, *Panjāb* of Amritsar and the *Paysah Akhbār* once again reiterated the same attack against Lekh Rām and demands on the Government to do something about him.<sup>39</sup> By the end of September 1896, charges which had been brought against Lekh Rām at Amritsar by Muslims from Delhī were dismissed by the Deputy Commissioner according to an angry *Chaudhwin Śadī*,

so as not to intensify the excitement prevailing among the parties, and thus avert serious consequences. Whatever the result of this particular case may be, it is evident that the acts of this shortsighted class of people will some day lead to disastrous consequ-

38. Jones, p. 203.

39. *S.V.N.P.* IX, No. 37, p. 517, *Paysah Akhbār*, August 29, 1896; see also, *ibid.*, No. 38, p. 530, *Chaudhwin Śadī*, September 1, 1896; *ibid.*, No. 40, p. 560, *Panjāb*, September 15 and *Paysah Akhbār*, September 19, 1896.

ences.<sup>40</sup>

Such disastrous consequences as *Chaudhwin Sadi* foresaw were scarcely six months away. During the last months of 1896 and early 1897, the number of communal riots increased significantly, with competition for Government posts becoming more tense and bitter than ever. One commentator has written :

The activities of reform groups and new religious sects had become intensified and had institutionalized the previously casual points of friction between opposing religious communities. Group consciousness, as it was developing under the impact of western thought, followed already existing lines of division in traditional Panjāb society.<sup>41</sup>

In 1897, communal tensions and hatreds in the Punjāb may have reached a point not to be exceeded again until partition in 1947. These destructive communal feelings have been reflected more fully in the newspaper reports of 1897 concerning the murder of Lekh Rām on March 6, and the role that Ghulām Aḥmad may or may not have played in that event.

## V

The tension, confusion, and the expression of feelings pro and con with respect to the murder of Lekh Rām appeared in more than thirty articles from nineteen different Panjāb newspapers of all points of view, all published within three weeks of the event. *Panjāb Samāchar*, a Hindū paper, reported the event on the day it happened in the house of Lālā Jiwān Lāl in the Dhal Mohallah at 6 P. M., Saturday, March 6. Their view was that

The murderer was a wicked Muhammadan, who had been living with the Pandit for some days and had expressed a desire to be re-admitted to the Hindu religion. The assassination of the Pandit is the result of a conspiracy.<sup>42</sup>

Continuing in the same vein, the editor expressed his doubts that the local authorities would do much to bring the "conspirators" to justice since the investigation was being directed by a "Muhammadan" and not a European officer.

40. *Ibid.*, No. 41, p. 574, *Chaudhwin Sadi*, September 23, 1896; see also, *Ibid.*, *Panjāb*, September 22, 1896.

41. Jones, p. 206.

42. *S.V.N.P.*, X, No. 11, p. 169, *Panjāb Samāchar*, March 6, 1897.

#### COMMUNALISM IN THE PUNJAB

The militant Hindū paper, *Akhbār-i-'Amm*, began its report with an attack on the British administration for allowing such a thing to happen in Lāhore. Admitting that both Lekh Rām and Ghulām Aḥmad, because of their writings and speeches, would have probably "come to grief long ago if India had been under any other rule," this editor chose to attack the Āryās for having "hit upon a novel method of abusing other religions...which the Āryās have learned from the Christian missionaries...first resorted to against the Hindu religion." Although the question of responsibility was far from clear in the editor's mind, the tone of his writing certainly indicated his anti-Government bias. He stated that under the British *rāj* the continuation of murders and the growing need for *chaukidars* (watchmen) in many sections of Lāhore was increasingly necessary.<sup>43</sup>

It was not long before the prophecy of Ghulām Aḥmad concerning Lekh Rām came to light in the press. *Bhārāt Sudhār*, in an extraordinary issue on March 13, published the following notice "alleged to have been issued by Mirza Ghulām Aḥmad of Kadian":

Ten years ago, in accordance with a revelation made to me by the Almighty, I issued a notice on the 20th February, 1886, to the effect that God had resolved upon punishing Pandit Lekh Ram for his blasphemy...I offered to reveal the form of punishment and the time within which it would be inflicted if the Pandit agreed (to such a course). The Pandit gave his free consent. I published another notice, dated the 20th February, 1893, containing the prophecy in question in detail...that the death of the Pandit, which would come to him as a punishment, would not result from ordinary fever or other disease, but that he would fall a victim to the wrath of the Almighty within six years of the date of the notice. Now it appears from a notice issued by the Aryā Samāj that the Pandit fell a martyr to his religion on the 7th March 1897...

...This is a grand sign which God has manifested as a warning to those who look upon his servant (the Mirza) with contempt, so that they may take pity on their lives and may not die while labouring under a delusion (*lit.* veil) (i.e., they may not die without repenting). If this business...had been the work of a human being, it would have come to naught long ago. Now the 25th year

43. *Ibid.*, pp. 169-170, *Akhbār-i-'Amm*, March 10, 1897.

of this work of revelation has commenced, *i.e.*, this work has extended over a period as long as that of a true Prophet, who left this world after working for 23 years.<sup>44</sup>

In Publishing these alleged remarks of Aḥmad, which were certainly in the spirit of his *Istiftā'* of May, 1897, *Bhārat Sudhār* was taking the lead, as it were, in setting up Aḥmad as the next victim of the communal warfare. The sarcasm of the editor's comments when he published Aḥmad's statements were evident:

the Mizra calls upon all to take a lesson from the death of Pandit Lekh Ram and embrace the religion preached by him. Let the Aryas ponder over the notice and see what sort of threat it contains. Will the Government remain quiet about it? Will the authors of such notices, if encouraged, allow the public peace to maintained?<sup>45</sup>

It is not difficult to see, from one point of view, how the editor could take the remarks Aḥmad had made as a threat to the social order. Aḥmad, himself, clearly did not see his remarks as such a threat. As they did not seem inconsistent with the general pattern of prophecy and revelation which he and his closest followers must have believed in more fervently than ever during the late 1890's, it is possible to suspect that he came to lack perspective about what was happening in the Panjāb during this period—if, indeed, anyone had perspective on these events. Aḥmad also did not really understand the political significance of what was happening, since he remained aloof from political involvement.

Taking a middle-of-the-road position, the anti-Āryā Hindū paper, *Akḥbār-i-'Amm*, placed the onus on the Government, to prosecute severely the murderer in order to set an example to others and prevent further folly. This statement was cloaked, however, in the implication that Lekh Rām had done far more to offend Hindūs than Muslims and that his murderer could easily have been a Hindū fanatic were it not already known that he was a Muslim.<sup>46</sup> *Paysah Akḥbār*, writing one week after the event, indicated the extent to which rumors were circulating through Lāhōre. It was the first newspaper to make the point that there was no foundation to the accusations being brought

44. *Ibid.*, No. 12, pp. 180-181, *Bhārat Sudhār*, March 13, 1897. Although Aḥmad may well have issued such an *ishtihār*, the text has not been discovered in any other Aḥmadī source.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 181.

against Ahmad, "seeing that the Muhammadans are not in the habit of avenging themselves in so cowardly a manner." Reporting on a rumour heard about the funeral orations, the editor went on to say that "a certain member of the Arya Samaj...declared that the Aryas should prepare to openly avenge themselves on the Muhammadans by assassinating their chief men."<sup>47</sup>

Although there is no evidence that Lajpat Rāi or Munshī Rām said any such thing, the fact of its being reported, even under the guise of rumour, added even more to the increasing tensions at work in the situation.

The *Panjāb Samāchar* of Lāhore, published March 13, outspokenly took the side of Lekh Rām in an article entitled "Murder of Pandit Lekh Ram, the second Gobind Singh." The editor lauded Lekh Rām for having published his tract on "Jehad"

in which the Pandit proved that the spread of Islam had been effected by means of the sword... (the reaction to which was that) the different sections of the Muhammadan community openly declared this "*kafir*" should be put to death. Indeed the author of *Mauud-i-Masihi* (i.e., Ahmad) went so far as to prophecy in that work that Lekh Ram would die a very painful death within six years on the Id day the Pandit was harrassed in various ways. Cases were instituted against him. But when the Mummadans, *who consider their religion to consist of nothing but the doctrine of "Jehad,"*<sup>48</sup> discovered that they were powerless against the Pandit and that the law could neither stop his pen nor silence his tongue, they set about devising other means for the purpose of getting rid of the courageous Lekh Ram...<sup>49</sup>

Well aware that Lekh Rām, through his practice of *shuddī* or reconversion of Muslims and Christians back to Hinduism, had done much to alienate himself from the Muslim community, the editor of the Hindū paper sang his praises nonetheless.

In writing to support what Lekh Rām had done, the editor of the *Panjāb Samāchar* introduced a new dimension to the communal tensions which had not appeared in the Panjāb press since the assassination. When he attempted to compare Lekh Rām to Gurū Gobind

46. *Ibid.*, p. 183, *Akhbār-i-Amm*, March 11, 1897.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 184, *Paysah Akhbār*, March 13, 1897.

48. Italics by the present writer.

49. *S.V.N.P.*, X, No. 12, p. 184, *Panjāb Samāchar*, March, 13 1897.



Singh, he raised a storm of protest in the Sikh community for which he had to apologize. In so doing, however, he again made the point that Lekh Rām had now done for the Hindūs what Gobind Singh had so valiantly once done for Sikhs.<sup>50</sup>

The atmosphere of rumour grew as *Bhārat Sudhār* of March 13 attacked *Paysah Akhbār* for suggesting that Lekh Rām's murder was tied up with an illicit relationship he was carrying on with an "unnamed" woman.<sup>51</sup> *Akhbar-i-Amm* took a far more moderate line in indicating how easily one could place a general blame on the Muslim community for the murder because of what Lekh Rām had done, Ghulām Aḥmad's prophecy and the growing prevalence of *ghazism* in border areas. Particularly critical of Aḥmad's conduct, the editor suggested that since he had prophesied the death of Lekh Rām on the basis of a revelation, he should now "use his vaunted powers and say who the murderer of the late Pandit is."<sup>52</sup>

*Rahbār-i-Hind* of March 15 was first to reveal the news that the police had searched the premises of several Muslim groups, including buildings of the Ahmadiyah at Qādiyān. Puzzled to understand why the police would search the property of both the Ahmadiyah and the Anjumān-i-Himayāt-i-Islām at Lāhore, "seeing that a deadly enmity exists between the two," the editor suggested that the police were trying to unite all Muslims even as the Āryā Samāj had been trying to unite Hindūs and predicted that open warfare would result. Rumors were abroad that the Hindūs were now thinking of murdering both Ghulām Ahmad and Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khān in reprisal. Calling for constraint on both sides, the editor of *Rahbār* stressed the responsibility for communal peace-keeping on the Government.<sup>53</sup>

Another dimension to the controversy precipitated by the murder emerged in the millitant Christian paper *Nūr-i-Afshān* of Ludhiāna, published March 12, 1897. This report began by remarking that Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad was a great enemy of Christianity and a man who bore "implacable hatred and malice towards its followers." Without even mentioning the murder about which it should have been clearly aware, it went on to stress the extent to which Ahmad was insulting and injuring "the Christian public" as a means of gaining notoriety

50. *Ibid.*, p.186. For the Sikh response, see *ibid.*, p.191, *Khalṣa Bahādur*, March 15, 1897.

51. *Ibid.*, *Bhārat Sudhār*, March 13, 1897.

52. *Ibid.*, pp. 187-188, *Akhbār-i-Amm* March, 15 1897.

53. *Ibid.*, pp. 189-190, *Rahbār-i-Hind*, March 15, 1897.

for himself. A week later *Nūr-i-Afshān* called upon the Government to pass laws punishing those who could prophesy concerning the death of others. Driving home his point with extreme vigour, the editor closed his article with the comments,

if the Almighty wishes to punish any person, he can do so without the aid of assassins and knives. Indeed, the use of the knife does not prove the wrath of God, but the malice and hostility of a black-hearted wretch.<sup>54</sup>

Most militant in its opposition to Ahmad was *Mullah Ja'far Zatali* whose editor, Muhammad Bakhsh, would join Muhammad Husayn of Batāla in the next two years to make life very difficult for Ahmad. Publishing a parody of the Mirzā's prophecy and declaring him an imposter, the paper went on to bait Ahmad on the issue of prophecy while appearing totally unconcerned for the communal tensions arising out of the Lekh Rām murder. The more staid *Akhbār-i-'Am* "sarcastically remark(ed)" the same week,

that Government should lose no time in showing its appreciation of so great a man. There may be other prophets in India, who possess the power of communicating with the Almighty, but the idea of a man possessed of such powers endeavouring to benefit the world by means of notices is certainly a novel one . . . Let the Government take advantage of the powers in question. The Mirza states that he is afraid that a conspiracy is on foot for his assassination. This fear is, however, not based on a revelation, but on letters received from friends.<sup>55</sup>

Although it would appear that Ghulām Ahmad had few friends outside the Ahmadiyah movement, even within Islām, at this time, *Sirāj al-Akhbār* was one paper which came to his defense by insisting that since there was a full two years left before the expected fulfilment of his prophecy, there would be no reason why Ahmad should have been so anxious to see his prophecy fulfilled already.<sup>56</sup>

New rumours came from Qādiyān that Ahmad had asked the

54. *Ibid.*, No. 13, pp. 200-201, *Nūr-i-Afshān*, March 12 and 19, 1897. Ahmad's prophecy concerning the death of the Christian missionary 'Abdullah 'Aṣim was particularly disturbing to the newspaper even though it did not come to pass in 1898 as prophesied.

55. *Ibid.*, No. 14, pp. 222-223, *Mullah Ja'far Zatali* and *Akhbār-i-'Am*, March 20, 1897.

56. *Ibid.*, p. 225, *Sirāj al-Akhbār*, March 22, 1897.

Government for protection because he feared an Āryā plot against his life. These were played up in the Muslim press, if only to ask the inevitable question, why did the Mirzā not believe that God would protect him. At the same time, the suggestion of a plot against Aḥmad was vehemently denied in the Āryā press. Thus, the worsening of relations between Hindus and Muslims continued to be reflected in what the latest press reports had to say of the Lekh Rām incident of 1897.

The March 27 issue of *Punjab Samāchar* expressed a particularly violent reaction against both Muslims in general and Aḥmad in particular. The murderer had not yet been apprehended, they argued, because the Muslim policemen were glad at the death of a *kafīr*, while the argument raised earlier by some Muslim papers that Lekh Rām had been as obnoxious to Hindūs as he had to Muslims and therefore may well have been assassinated by a Hindū, was debunked by five "proofs." These were:

1. The prophecy made by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Kadian regarding the death of the Pandit.
2. The case instituted against the deceased by the Muhammadans at Delhi.
3. The *fatwa* passed by the Muhammadan community in general in favour of the assassination of Lekh Rām.
4. The finding of telegrams received by Muhammadans from different places inquiring as to the whereabouts of the Pandit.
5. The deceased's last words : "That wretch came (to me) to be purified and has killed me."<sup>57</sup>

Another twist to the accusations and counter-accusations was raised by the Amritsar Sikh paper, *Singh Sahāī*, which had come to blows with Aḥmad two years earlier over the issue of Aḥmad's claim that Gurū Nānak was a Muslim. An Article in its March 30 issue implied that the murder of Lekh Rām was a "deep laid conspiracy, and that the Muhammadans of Batala believe that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is concerned in the matter," That Muhammad Husayn and his followers in the Ahl-i-Hadīth, already strongly opposed to Aḥmad, had to turn to a Sikh newspaper in order to press such a charge, gives evidence to the unanimity of the Muslim newspapers in refuting the charge that a

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57. *Ibid.*, No. 16, pp. 275-276, *Panjāb Samāchar*, March 27, 1897.

Muslim plot was involved. Even though most Muslim papers had little good to say about Ahmad, they would not have published such a notice at this time.

The first weeks of April, 1897, saw the press reflecting the increased communal tensions throughout the Punjab and especially in Lāhore. Rumours that Hindūs and Muslims were poisoning each other and beginning a boycott of each other's shops were rife. At the same time a number of papers reported that the District Superintendent of Police at Gūrdāspūr had searched Ahmad's house on April 8, more than a month after the murder. The press was in agreement this time that such a search would prove useless especially as Ahmad was well aware of the search already held at the Anjumān in Lāhore. Ahmad's own *Istiftā'* of May 1, while referring to the search, only seemed to mention it as one of a series of incidents which he felt the need to report to the public. Since *al-Hakam*, the earliest regular Ahmadī newspaper, was not yet being published, the brief remarks on page 2 of the *Istiftā'* are the only statements available to present the Ahmadīyah point of view on these events written at the time. Ahmad's biographer has dismissed the incident, however, saying,

He was very glad when the Superintendent of Police told him that he had orders to search his house in connection with the murder of Pt. Lekh Ram. Ahmad at once took the officials and others, including some of his enemies, into his house which was surrounded by police. He took them to every room in the house. Bundles of all kinds of papers were opened and read out. By coincidence (*sic*) the first papers that came to the notice of the authorities... were the writings of Lekh Ram and Ahmad... In short, the police made thorough enquiry and were perfectly satisfied.<sup>59</sup>

Attacks against Ahmad continued, however, in such papers as *Mullah Ja'far Zatallī* which published a notice written by Muhammad Husayn<sup>60</sup> on May 1, 1897, citing two causes of current communal tensions. The first, Husayn asserted, was healthy competition between Hindūs and Muslims which, he hoped, would not be based on differences of religion alone. The second cause of tensions, however, was clearly the death of Lekh Rām which could easily be

58. *Ibid.*, p. 279, *Singh Sahā'i*, March 30, 1897.

59. Dard, pp. 391-392; "*Istiftā'*," p. 2; *S.V.N.P.*, X, No. 18, pp. 328-329.

60. Muḥammad Husayn of Batāla was a leader of the Ahl-i-Hadīth sect of Islām and a vociferous opponent of Ahmad.

resolved by a concerted effort to find the culprit. Ghulām Ahmad, for all his claims, did not really prophesy anything and he should be ignored by both Muslims and Hindūs alike.<sup>61</sup>

Meanwhile, the *Nazīm-al-Hind* of Lāhōre on May 29 published a lengthy article blaming Ghulām Ahmad "and his bloodthirsty followers" for preaching intense hatred against the British Government ever since the search of his house at Qādiyān on April 8 and "for secretly predicting the destruction of the British Empire in India." The paper further attacked Ahmad's claim to be the true *mahdī*, found him solely responsible for the ill-feeling between Hindus and Muslims as well as the instigator of ill-feeling between Sikhs and Muslims. This most blatant of all attacks on Ahmad ended by suggesting that Ahmad was leading a political movement which the Government should check carefully.<sup>62</sup>

Although the repudiation of Ahmad that continued throughout the rest of 1897 was primarily the result of his "role" in the Lakh Rām incident, most of what was written in a derogatory manner was in the Muslim paper *Mallah Ja'far Zatallī*, which was beginning its campaign against Ahmad, a campaign which would not terminate until the court case in 1898 involving Ahmad and Muhammad Husayn.

It was ironic that Ghulām Ahmad's polemics against the Āryā Samāj which came to a head in the murder of Lakh Rām and the aftermath of that event in which communal tensions reached one of their highest points in nineteenth century Panjāb, should have developed to be a far greater inter-Muslim struggle, in which Ahmad's claims were to be consistently repudiated by fellow Muslims being more and more ignored by Āryā Samājīs, Hindūs and Sikhs. In the broad perspective of the events of 1897, one cannot but feel that Ahmad, although he may have asked for it, received nothing but abuse by all, but especially by other Muslims. It is equally ironic to note that when the first reports of the arrested Muslim murderer appeared in the press of mid-November, 1897, of the five Panjābi papers reporting, each expressed joy that the murderer was finally coming to justice, but not one commented about Ghulām Ahmad so that he might be vindicated of suspicions once and for all.<sup>63</sup>

61. *Ibid.*, No. 21, p. 390, *Mallah Ja'far Zatallī*, May 1, 1897.

62. *Ibid.*, No. 25, p. 458, *Nazīm-al-Hind*, May 29, 1897.

63. *Ibid.*, No. 48 p. 1003, *Paysah Akhbār*, November 22, 1897; *Panjāb Samāchar*,

[Contd. on page 341]

With the capture of the assassin of Lekh Rām, the public furore in the press seemed almost to have disappeared. 1898 found Ahmad's name continually in the news, but now it primarily appeared in relation to his controversies with the Muslim 'ulamā' on the one hand, and because of his strong stand on the anti-Muslim Christian pamphlet "Ummahat al-Mū'minīn," on the other. Reported references to the Lekh Rām incident appeared only four times during 1898, three of which were in Āryā papers and the fourth in *al-Hakam*, newly available Urdū organ of the Ahmadiyah. The *al-Hakam* statement appeared on the anniversary of the assassination.<sup>64</sup>

Serious Hindū-Muslim tensions involving both Ahmadiyah and the Āryā Samāj continued during the next decade, that is, up to Ahmad's death in 1908. In the midst of this strife, the Ahmadiyah movement was placed in a difficult position. On the one hand, their potential for growth and expansion was dependent upon their ability to publish tracts and newspapers which would uphold the views of Ahmad in defence of Islām. On the other hand, the militancy of the Āryā Samāj and such papers as *Bande Matāram*, whose aim was in part the assertion of a nationalist position and continued criticism of the Government, a position which the Ahmadiyah strongly opposed, led the Government to propose amendments to the Press Law in 1908. In reaction to this proposal, *al-Hakam* recognizing "the extreme necessity for putting down seditious writing in the country," went on to express the opinion that such a rigorous law would only lead to more discontent among the people. The editor went on to suggest that the Press Association of the province be given the opportunity to set press standards.

By the same token, Nūr al-Dīn on September 1, 1908, only three months after becoming the *Khalīfah*, issued a manifesto enjoining all Ahmadīs from nationalist activities. "To excite disaffection against the Government," he asserted

...and to spread seditious ideas is not only an attempt against the Government established by law in the country, but is really

*Contd. from page 340]*

November 20, 1897; *ibid.*, No. 49, p. 1020, *Koh-i-Nūr*, November 30, 1897; *ibid.*, No. 50 p. 1033, *Chaudhūr Sadi*, December 1, 1897; *Tāj al-Akhbār*, December 4, 1897. The assassin, a Muslim, had apparently acted on his own and represented no group.

64. S.F.N.P., XI, No. 16, p. 239, *al-Hakam*, March 13, 1898.

a step directed against the peace and freedom of the country itself. Such people are the enemies of their country though they might pose to be its well-wishers.<sup>65</sup>

The fact that Nūr al-Dīn was compelled to issue this manifesto during the first few months of his leadership in 1908 was an indication that the Ahmadiyah could no longer side-step the political issues which were already engulfing India and which would become more crucial during the next twenty-five years. While there is no question that the Ahmadiyah stood firmly with the Government, they did so with a growing awareness of what was happening around them. No longer could a missionary movement which had expanded its horizons from Qādiān and Gurdāspūr district to Lāhore, Delhi, Bombay and areas outside of India remain aloof defending Islām on religious grounds alone. By the very fact that Aḥmad himself had chosen polemics against Christians and Aryā Samājīs and had, through his own interpretation of Islām, come to verbal blows with fellow Muslims, he had attracted the attention of the press and Government to his movement. The internal developments of the Ahmadiyah within the decade after Aḥmad's death were to turn the tide for the movement over just issue : should not Ahmadīs be involved in "political" issues when the future of Islām was at stake ?

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65. *Review of Religions*, VII, September, 1908, p. 375, quoted in part in *S.V.N.P.*, XXI, p. 577. Further backing of Nūr al-Dīn's position appeared in an article in *al-Hakam*, September 8, 1908, recalling Ghulām Aḥmad's position on the Government as well.

## The Arya Samaj and Congress Politics in the Punjab 1894-1908

NORMAN G. BARRIER\*

Indian historians have tended in the past to explain the origins of nationalism and political activity in the subcontinent in terms of all-India organizations such as the Indian National Congress or in terms of the political thought and background of important national figures. As research on modern India accumulates, however, it is becoming apparent that this limited explanation of Indian political history is no longer adequate. The major regions had their own distinct social and political development which moulded the response of local politicians to the larger political movements and which in turn had some effect on the speed and direction of the Indian nationalist movement. A fruitful approach to understanding the Congress would thus be to view it as an assembly of politicians who had regional political ties and who were strongly influenced by regional organizations. The significant role of the Arya Samaj in the politics of North India particularly supports such an interpretation. The revivalist Arya Samaj contributed to Hindu militancy and aggravated Hindu-Muslim relations. Although this aspect of Arya activity has yet to receive systematic treatment, the broad outline of the Samaj's part in hardening divisions between Hindus and Muslims is well known. The role of Aryas in provincial and national politics, on the other hand, has received little or no attention.

This paper explores the relation of the Arya Samaj to Punjab nationalist politics prior to the Morley-Minto reforms. During this period the Samaj was probably the most important factor in determining the character and direction of the Punjab Congress. Association with the Arya Samaj gave educated Hindus a political orientation and an impetus to carry on political work. From 1899 onwards Aryas began to participate in and finally dominate the Punjab Congress.

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Although the Aryas reinforced its Hindu character, they made some effort to remain nonsectarian. After the 1907 disturbances, however, Aryas played a crucial role in the shift from nationalist to communal organizations. My object is therefore to understand the rise and decline of Arya interest in the Congress and what implications this had for Punjab politics.

The founder of the Arya Samaj, Dayananda Saraswati, attempted to revive and reform Hinduism through a reinterpretation of its history and sacred literature. He claimed that the Vedas were given to the Aryans at a time when India stood first in knowledge and cultural achievement. Descendants of the Aryans had been led away from the Vedas—the source of all truth and light—by false doctrines and by the trickery of the Brahmins. India's fall from her golden age had been completed during the Muslim and British conquests, when the degraded Hindus began quarreling and fell prey to wine and beef urged upon them by the new rulers.<sup>1</sup> Dayananda called on Hindus to raise India once again to world eminence by reaffirming the religion and principles contained in the Vedas. This necessitated a break with the priesthood and an end to elaborate rituals. Only one God should be worshipped. A return to the Vedas, according to Dayananda, also meant re-examination of prevalent Hindu concepts of education and society. Dayananda reinterpreted the Vedas so that they supported caste and marriage reform and proposed the establishment of schools stressing both European and "Vedic" subjects.<sup>2</sup>

Within fifteen years after the organization of the Punjab Arya Samaj in 1877, its membership included a large proportion of the Hindu commercial castes (Khatri, Arora, and Bania) which virtually monopolized western education and the new professions introduced by the British.<sup>3</sup> The Arya Samaj appealed to the English-educated

1. Dayananda Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, trans. Chiranjiva Bharadwaja (Lahore, 1909), pp. 300-01, 312-18, 372. For a lengthy discussion of the Samaj, see Charles H. Heimsath, *Indian Nationalism and Hindu Social Reform* (Princeton, 1964), pp. 113-30, 292-308.
2. *Satyarth Prakash*, pp. 36-87. Also, Chhajju Singh, *The Life of Swami Dayanand Saraswati* (Lahore, 1905), I, 328-35.
3. *Punjab Census*, 1900, I, 115-16; *Dayanand*, I, 339-41; Prakash Tandon, *Punjabi Century 1857-1947* (London, 1961), p.33. Detailed documentation and discussion of this point is in Kenneth W. Jones, "The Arya Samaj in the Punjab: A Study of Social Reform and Religious Revivalism, 1877-1902" (unpub. diss., Univ. of California, 1966), ch. 2; Norman G. Barrier, "Punjab Politics and the Disturbances of 1907" (unpub. diss., Duke Univ., 1966), ch. I.

Hindus because it met at least three of their pressing needs. First, Dayananda's claim that caste should be determined primarily by merit, not birth, opened new paths of social mobility to educated Vaishyas who were trying to achieve social status commensurate with their improving economic status.<sup>4</sup> In addition, Dayananda's attacks on Islam and Christianity and his "logical" defence of Hinduism based on a reinterpretation of scripture offered Hindus a means of protecting their religion and way of life from Muslim and Christian missionaries.<sup>5</sup> Besides leading Hindus in defence of their culture and religious ideals, the Samaj preached a reformed Hinduism more palatable to western-educated Punjabis embarrassed by the polytheism and caste practices of popular Hinduism. A direct message of monotheism "on the authority of the Vedas" tended "to place the modern Hindu religion on the same plane as Christianity or Islam."<sup>6</sup> Caste reform and a simplified ritual also removed the most offensive aspects of Hinduism: "To our new professional class it provided a western social reorientation combined with simple Vedic belief and ritual. Its opposition to orthodoxy and idol worship, and its revival of Vedic ritual in modern form, without temples and priest, made a direct appeal to the Punjabi intelligentsia."<sup>7</sup> The Arya Samaj was, in short, a fusion of east and west which permitted educated Hindus to accept new patterns of life without denying the validity of their heritage and their culture.

It is important that the Arya Samaj came to exert an influence among the commercial and professional classes, for these classes increasingly became the strongest supporters of provincial and nationalist political activity. Before discussing the nature of that support, some brief mention should be made of the Samaj's role in moulding the attitudes of its members and giving them practical experience in politics.

The Arya Samaj shaped the political attitudes of Punjabi Hindus by giving them an interpretation of India's past, providing a vision of and pride in the Hindu nation, and suggesting remedies for India's economic condition. This influence was particularly evident in the intellectual development of Lajpat Rai. Lajpat Rai was not a system-

4. Treated fully in Jones, "Arya Samaj," ch. 2.

5. Lajpat Rai *Life and Works of Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi, M.A.* (Lahore, 1891), p. 9; B. C. Pal *Memories of My Life and Times* (Calcutta, 1932-1951), II, 71; Dayanand, I, xxiii-xxiv.

6. Pal, *Memories*, II, 80.

7. *Punjabi Century*, p. 33. Also, Dayanand, I, i-xxx.

atic political philosopher, but the few key ideas continually appearing in his speeches and writings can be traced almost invariably to association with the Arya Samaj. Lajpat Rai accepted Dayananda's presentation of the Vedic period as the golden age of Indian culture lost through the trickery of Brahmins and western contamination.<sup>8</sup> Dayananda's teachings filled the young student with resolve to restore India to her original glories and furnished him with a definite program for effecting that restoration. To help India, her citizens must cease mimicking the west and rely instead upon their own traditions and values. Education, moral regeneration, and industry must develop on indigenous lines. Such a program was primarily the responsibility of the Hindu community, and Hindus should not sacrifice their "mission" for transparent and temporary political alliances with Muslims or Christians.<sup>9</sup>

In essence, this analysis with its insistence on self-help by the Hindu community was opposed to the dominant themes associated with the Congress. The Congress tended to look forward, not backward; to talk of a return to a past age was considered regressive. According to Banerjee, Wacha and Mehta, communal and regional differences must be submerged for the good of the entire Indian Nation. Not so to Lajpat Rai, who was first a Hindu, then an Indian. As he observed, the Arya Samaj had contributed heavily to his communalist stance. "The tiny barge of the Arya Samaj was at that time to me the barge of Hindu nationality."<sup>10</sup> The Samaj engendered similar ideas in many of Lajpat Rai's contemporaries who joined him in political activity.<sup>11</sup>

8. *Autobiographical Writings of Lajpat Rai*, ed. V. C. Joshi (New Delhi, 1965), p. 28; *Hindu Nationalism* (Lahore, 1940), pp. 2-3; *Shivaji*, trans. into Hindi from Urdu by Shivshankar Duvedi (Calcutta, 1933), pp. 15-20.

9. Reflected in the following: "A study of Hindu Nationalism," *Kayastha Samachar*, VI (1902), 249-54; "The Social Genius of Hinduism," *Hindustan Review and Kayastha Samachar*, IX (1904), 311-35; "The Economic and industrial Campaign in India," *Kayastha Samachar*, IV (1901), 131-35; "The Coming Indian National Congress—Some Suggestions," *Kayastha Samachar*, IV (1901), 376-85.

10. *Lajpat Rai*, p. 29.

11. For example, *Lajpat Rai*, pp. 85-89; Ajit Singh, "Autobiography" (unpub. mss. in possession of Ganpat Rai of Ambala), pp. 3-11; Dwarka Das, *A Problem or a Few Stray Thoughts about the Indifferentism of Our Young Men* (Lahore, 1903), pp. 51-52; Ganeshi Lal, *The Arya Samaj* (Lahore, 1887), pp. 8-11; Dayanand, I, x; Pal, *Memories*, II, 85.

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In addition to inspiring political work and providing Aryas with an ideology, the Samaj served as a training ground—an organization in which faction and political maneuvering were so common that Aryas acquired great skill in debate, controversy, and working behind the scenes. Cliques emerged, revolving around fiery leaders, which jostled with one another for authority and control of institutions. The Samaj finally split into a “DAV” and a “Gurukul” sections in 1893, but internal struggles went on in each of the separate section long after the split.<sup>12</sup> Lajpat Rai and his fellow Aryas were therefore particularly prepared to assume leadership of the Punjab nationalist movement, if they chose, because of practical political experience and a program centering on self-help and Hindu nationalism.

The Congress met with little success in the Punjab prior to 1899. Punjab support for the Congress was generally confined to the handful of Bengalis and Punjabi Brahmo Samajists who controlled the Lahore Indian Association and published the Lahore *Tribune*. Except for 1888 and 1893, when Congress membership tended to become a communal issue in the Punjab, the liberal leaders of the Indian Association such as J. C. Bose, Ruchi Ram Sahni and Dyal Singh were unable to arouse widespread interest in the national, secular program of the Congress.<sup>13</sup> The Arya reluctance to join the Congress explains in large part the inability of the movement to take root in the Punjab during this early period. The Aryas, who dominated the new professional class, were indifferent or even hostile to the Congress. A few Aryas attended the annual sessions, but with the exception of Jaishi Ram, a junior Congress leader and an associate of Dyal Singh, none were included among the upper ranks of the Punjabi nationalists. The Arya Samaj as a community was too occupied with cow protection, internal politics, and defence of Hindu interests to

12. For the issues splitting the Samaj, which included meat-eating, educational policy and the direction of the organization, see *Lajpat Rai*, pp. 46-78.

13. Dyal Singh, *Nationalism* (Lahore, 1885), pp. i-ii, 5-6; K. P. Roy, *Need For National Politics* (Lahore, n.d.). As Lieutenant-Governor James Lyall noted, “The Congress is a lethargic thing, centering around the *Tribune* and its slipshod master, Dyal Singh.” Minute, Oct. 1, 1893, Punjab Government (hereinafter PG) General File, October 1893, 27-28A. Although a few of the PG proceedings cited in this study are available only in the West Pakistan Record Office, Lahore (hereinafter W.P.R.O.), most files are found both in the W.P.R.O. and the Commonwealth Relations Library, London (hereinafter cited as India Office).

participate in a national political organization.<sup>14</sup> Arya leaders tried to reinforce this preoccupation with Arya affairs because they feared that the British might bring sanctions against the Samaj if its members were involved in agitation and "disloyal" activities.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, Aryas tended to distrust the liberal and pro-western views defended by Congressmen. They felt that the Congress cared more about petitioning and holding meeting than actually establishing programs which would aid India's economic and social progress.<sup>16</sup>

Between 1894 and 1900, Aryas gradually became interested in provincial politics and assumed leadership of the Punjab Congress. By 1894 several influential opponents of Arya participation in agitation had died, and their places were taken by a new generation of leaders who felt that Aryas should play a greater role in activities outside the Samaj. Two younger leaders of the DAV section, Lal Chand and Ishwar Das, and several of their followers consequently began to cooperate with other Hindus in Punjab public institutions.<sup>17</sup> Initially, Lal Chand joined with Dyal Singh and K. P. Roy to form the Punjab National Bank, and this was quickly followed by partnership in a second firm, the Bharat Insurance Company.<sup>18</sup> Arya interest in local industry became more pronounced late in 1895, when the Indian government placed an excise tax on Indian cotton goods. Aryas considered the tax an effort to cripple the infant cotton industry and helped establish Swadeshi associations which circulated pledges to wear only *deshi* (Indian-made) cloth; they also founded small industries.<sup>19</sup> Lal Chand meanwhile led Aryas into the activities of the Indian Association. The new role of the Aryas in Punjab politics first became evident in the Hoshiarpur provincial conference on December

14. *Lajpat Rai*, pp. 30-41, 88. Also, Sri Ram Sharma, *Mahatma Hans Raj* (Lahore, 1941), pp. 27-51; *Tribune*, June 6, 1888.

15. *Lajpat Rai*, pp. 88-89.

16. *Lajpat Rai*, pp. 86-89; *Arya Magazine*, VII (1887), 321-22. Also, Harkishen Lal to Gordon Walker, June 22, 1907, 1907 PG Political File 11/B (hereinafter cited as 1907 PGP 11/B).

17. For example, Lala Sain Das died prior to 1893. Moreover, after the split many of the opponents of Arya politicians moved into the Gurukul section. Two other DAV leaders, Lajpat Rai and Hans Raj, avoided politics, although Lajpat Rai later moved into local and then national political activity.

18. *Lajpat Rai*, pp. 96-97; *Report of the Punjab National Bank 1898* (n.p., n.d.), p. i.

19. Lal Chand, *An Essay on the Decline of Native Industries* (Lahore, 1895), pp. 24-29; *Tribune*, Feb. 19, 1895, Jan. 1, 1896.

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15, 1895. Significantly, Lal Chand presided, and Aryas such as Ishwar Das and Dwarka Das gave major speeches.<sup>20</sup> Aryas were prominent in the 1896 and 1898 provincial conferences and in the subsequent political program of the Association. In 1899, for example, they helped organize the agitation against the Punjab Alienation of Land Bill. The legislation, which placed restrictions on land transfer between agriculturists and the commercial castes, posed an economic threat to the class from which the Aryas were primarily drawn and drove them further into active politics.<sup>21</sup> The alienation controversy also precipitated the entrance of the Aryas into the Punjab Congress. In 1899 Jaishi Ram and Harkishen Lal, a Brahmo entrepreneur and head trustee of the *Tribune*, had invited the 1900 Congress to Lahore to symbolize the solidarity of India opposition to the alienation bill.<sup>22</sup> The two leaders encountered difficulty in preparing for the session because death, sickness and retirement had depleted the small core of Congress workers, and they therefore tried to recruit a new band of Congressmen. Jaishi Ram appealed to his Arya friends for help. Lal Chand, Lajpat Rai, and several other leading Aryas accepted his invitation and joined the reception committee.<sup>23</sup>

The economic threat of the alienation restrictions temporarily brought Aryas into the Congress, and they remained involved in Congress activities until 1908. Indeed, for eight years the Aryas supplied most of the leaders and active members for the Punjab Congress. Beginning with the Lahore session, Arya attendance at annual meeting rose, reaching almost half of the total Punjab delegation in 1906. The membership statistics for the Congress Subjects Committee also indicate that Aryas virtually took over Punjab Congress leadership. From 1900 onwards, Aryas furnished over half of the Punjabis on the com-

20. *The First Punjab Provincial Conference at Hoshiarpur* (Lahore, 1896), pp. i-iii, 2-6, 14-22; supplement, *Tribune*, Dec. 18, 1895.

21. Mackworth Young minute, Jan. 2, 1900 Punjab Financial Commissioner File 441/104A, Keep With (W. P. Board of Revenue, Lahore). The bill and agitation are discussed in Norman G. Barrier, *The Punjab Alienation of Land Bill of 1900* (Duke Univ. Program in Comparative Studies on Southern Asia Monograph and Occasional Papers Series, mon. 2; Durham, 1966).

22. *1899 Congress Report* (Lucknow, 1900), pp. 106-07; *Tribune*, Jan. 2, 1900.

23. *Lajpat Rai*, pp. 91, 97; Harkishen Lal memo on the Congress, Aug. 13, 1907, PGP 11/B.

mittee.<sup>24</sup> The quality of leadership was even more important than mere numerical strength. The prominent figures in Indian Association and Congress meeting after 1900 were Arya : Ram Bhaj Datta, Hans Raj Sawnhey, Amolak Ram, Dhanpat Rai, Sangam Lal, Dawarka Das, Lal Chand, and Lajpat Rai.

Two important factors contributed to the increasing role of the Aryas, who generally thought in terms of regional and communal loyalty, in an organization premised on Hindu-Muslim cooperation and national unity. First, when Hindu-Muslim antagonism was rampant, Aryas tended to favor communal rather than Congress politics. Generalization on the state of Hindu-Muslim relations is dangerous, but Indian government documents and local newspaper reports suggest that the crest of the mounting communal tension in the Punjab was the 1897 murder of Lekh Ram, an Arya zealot. Within a few months the tempers of both communities cooled, due primarily to British peace-making efforts and the realization on the part of educated Punjabis that continued incidents would only result in more murders and widespread disorder.<sup>25</sup> The uneasy truce between Hindus and Muslims that lasted from 1898 until 1907 was broken only by the news of communal rioting connected with the Bengal partition agitation. It is more than a coincidence that an Arya link with the Congress came at a time when communal tension was at an ebb. Freed from communal warfare, Aryas were more open to Congress pleas for national and secular politics.

The second and probably more significant factor was the belief of the Aryas that the Congress could be converted from a "do-nothing" organization into a vehicle for affecting national growth and regeneration. Although Aryas had unsuccessfully attempted to include the development of industry in the Congress platform since 1888, the older

24. The Aryas as a percentage of the total Punjabi delegates : 1899, 39% (10 of 26); 1900, 36% (151 of 421); 1901, 33% (10 of 30); 1904, 50% (9 of 18); 1905, 49% (51 of 104); 1906, 47% (65 of 138). The Aryas as a percentage of the Punjabi Aryas, Hindus, and Sikhs on the committee : 1899, 40% (4 of 10); 1900, 58% (25 of 46); 1901, 60% (3 of 5); 1904, no members; 1905, 62% (18 of 29); 1906, 63% (20 of 32). Statistics extracted from annual reports, corrected with additional information from *Tribune*, and checked against cumulative biographical files on Punjab Congressmen.

25. For example, Mackworth Young to Elgin, July 15, 1897, Elgin Collection (Eur. Mss. F 84, India office); Mackworth Young minute, Dec. 28, 1897, PG General File, Jan. 1887, 12-12a.

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Arya leaders had been content to remain outside the Congress and to develop their own programs of Swadeshi and self-help.<sup>26</sup> Now the new generation of Arya politicians was determined to enter the arena of Congress politics in order to win support for industrial development and the spread of mass education.<sup>27</sup>

The Aryas rallied a large number of Punjabis to the 1900 Lahore session and pressed their ideas on politics and national growth upon the Congress. The 421 Punjabi delegates dominated the meeting because only 146 delegates from other province braved the journey to Lahore. Punjabis also controlled the Subjects Committee.<sup>28</sup> Harkishen Lal and Lajpat Rai immediately proposed that the Congress set aside half a day each session for discussion on education and industry. The Bengalis protested, but the matter was referred to a sub-committee which endorsed the Punjab suggestion. The Subjects Committee also agreed to the Punjab proposal that two new committees be appointed, one for education and another for industry, to suggest means of improving the country. Harkishen Lal was named secretary of the committees, but the Punjabi members were generally Aryas. Finally, the Punjabis were determined to strengthen the Congress constitution so that the Indian Congress Committee would eventually assume control over the organization's finances and policy. This would break the monopoly of power supposedly held by prominent Bengali and Bombay politicians and give the Punjab a continual voice in Congress affairs. The Subjects Committee grudgingly gave the Punjabis a larger number of seats on the ICC. The Punjab number was raised from four to six delegates, while the number from Bombay, Madras, and Bengal was lowered from eight to seven delegates.<sup>29</sup>

The subsequent Congress rejection of the constitutional arrangements and the program of education and industry adopted by the Lahore session temporarily drove Punjabis away from the Congress. The Congress leaders decided to abandon the infant constitution because they felt that younger politicians who participated in the ICC were too inexperienced to mould Congress policy. The 1901 Calcutta Congress

26. *Lajpat Rai*, pp. 88-90; Lal Chand, *Swadeshi* (Lahore, 1906), pp. 2-3.

27. *Swadeshi*, pp. 4-5; *Tribune*, Dec. 25, 1900. An example of this attitude is Lajpat Rai, "Coming Congress," pp. 131-35.

28. Supplement, *Tribune*, Dec. 28, 1900; *Bengalee*, Jan. 8, 1901.

29. *1900 Congress Report* (Lahore, 1901), pp. a-h, 79. Also, debate summary in *Bengalee* Jan. 1, 1901.; "Congressman," *Tribune*, Jan. 19, 1901).



accordingly did not heed the ICC's advice on resolutions and refused to reappoint its old members.<sup>30</sup> The Calcutta Subjects Committee also would not permit a discussion of education and industry. Opposition to the Punjabi resolution had been growing since the Lahore meeting. The Bengalis, who were most numerous on the 1901 Subjects Committee, felt that the Congress should not be involved in educational and industrial development, and therefore they refused to allot a special period for discussing the two subjects. The Congress instead passed a resolution that a committee be formed to discuss whether a resolution on industries should be presented at the *next* session.<sup>31</sup>

Perhaps the older and more seasoned Punjabi Congressmen would have un-questioningly accepted this rejection of the Punjabi position, but the new Arya leaders loudly charged the Congress with disinterest in democratic procedure and the problems of India. Lajpat Rai wrote articles attacking Congress leaders, for example, while the *Tribune* published numerous articles and letters criticizing Congress "inaction."<sup>32</sup> At the 1901 session the Punjabis threatened to leave Calcutta over the issue of the constitution and were finally quieted only by the assurances of the secretary, Wacha, that the ICC would meet the following year and elect the next president. When Wacha then refused to call a meeting of the ICC and personally appointed Surendranath Banerja as the 1902 president, Punjabis charged that the Congress was the "plaything of a clique" and seceded from the nationalist organization.<sup>33</sup> Punjabis did not attend the 1902 Ahmedabad Congress, and only a handful of older politicians from Ambala attended the 1903 session.

**Until 1904**, Congress politics in the Punjab were dormant. Then the news of Japan's victories over Russia renewed interest in the future of India and national improvement. The Arya Samaj once again furnished leaders for a movement to encourage native industry and self-help. Aryas held sympathy meetings for Japan, introduced the Japanese language into their college curriculum, sent a few students

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30. *Tribune*, Oct. 1, 1901, Jan. 28, 1902; Alfred Nundy, "The Troubles of the National Congress," *East and West*, II (1903), 1403-09.

31. *Tribune*, Jan. 28, 1902, editorial, *Kayastha Samachar*, V (1902), 3-5.

32. Lajpat Rai, "Coming Congress", pp. 131-35; *Tribune*, Oct. 1, Nov. 5, 1901.

33. *Tribune*, April 23, 1903. Conflict between Harkishen Lal and the Aryas also helped break up the local Congress committee.

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to Tokyo, and helped organize new industries.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, the surge of patriotism intensified Arya concern over the "complete extinction of political life in the Punjab" and led to the establishment of the *Panjabee*, an English language news-paper which an Arya syndicate organized to criticize the British and to spark a political revival among educated Punjabis. Accepting fully the Arya analysis of India's predicament, the new paper deified the doctrine of "self-help at any cost" and commented frequently upon India's lost golden age and British exploitation.<sup>35</sup>

In addition to founding a political newspaper, Arya politicians led Punjabis back into the Congress. Although Lajpat Rai and his friends still distrusted the Congress leadership, they were disturbed by the taunts from other provinces that Punjabis were selfish and unpatriotic. The political situation within the Congress had also changed, for Tilak and the extremists were making a determined attempt to wrest a new constitution and a "practical" program from the Congress leaders.<sup>36</sup> The Aryas initially opposed attending the 1904 Bombay Congress, but following a month of further discussion, they decided that the Punjab should send a protest deputation. Lajpat Rai proposed at a December meeting of the Indian Association that Punjabis choose their best speakers and bid them confront the Congress with demands for a constitution and an effective program. Harkishen Lal, who continued to be hostile toward the Congress, did not attend the meeting, and the motion carried by a slim majority.<sup>37</sup>

The Punjab deputation was unsuccessful in forcing the Bombay congress to grant a constitution, but the Subjects Committee agreed to refer the issue to a sub-committee. Punjabis were generally satisfied with the decision. The *Tribune* and the *Panjabee* applauded the "compromise" and asked Punjabis to return to the Congress.<sup>38</sup> Lajpat Rai also defended the Congress in letters to the *Panjabee*. Because criticism from Punjabis and the extremist camp seemed to have made Congress leaders move in the "right direction," he argued, local

34. *Tribune*, July, 15, 1904; Dina Nath, *Japan Ki Taraqqi Kā Raz* (Lahore, 1905), pp. 1-3; Navajadhikar Shrivastav *Lajpat Raya* (Simla 1921), pp. 17-21.

35. *Panjabee* Oct. 3, Nov. 21, 1904; *Lajpat Rai*, pp. 98-99. Lajpat Rai wrote many of the key editorials. The editor, K. K. Athavale, was chosen by Tilak.

36. Harkishen Lal memo, 1907 PGP 11/B. The *Tribune* printed over a dozen letters during 1904 chiding Punjabis on their lack of patriotism.

37. *Tribune*, Dec. 14, 17, 1904; *Panjabee*, Dec. 12, 19, 1904.

38. *Tribune*, Dec. 31, 1904; *Panjabee*, Jan. 9, 1905.

politicians should abandon the 'impolitic' policy of remaining outside the Congress.<sup>39</sup>

Lajpat Rai emerged from the constitutional negotiations an important Congress man. His speeches and conversations with Wacha and Gokhale impressed the two Congress secretaries, who named him to the constitution committee and suggested that he be included as the Punjab Member on the deputation to England which was planned for the spring of 1905.<sup>40</sup> Lajpat Rai's attempt to solidify his political position by securing the Indian Association nomination as the Punjab member of the deputation evoked sharp opposition from a few non-Arya politicians led by Harkishen Lal. Harkishen Lal considered Aryas 'bigots' who looked back to an imaginary Hindu past instead of being progressive. The liberal protege of Dyal Singh also hated the Aryas because an Arya clique had forced him and his friends out of the directorship of the Punjab National Bank.<sup>41</sup> Harkishen Lal returned from political retirement and made an issue of the nomination, but his belated attempt to prevent Lajpat Rai and in effect the Arya Samaj from controlling the Punjab Congress was futile. In May Lajpat Rai journeyed to England as the sole leader of the revived Congress party.<sup>42</sup>

**While Lajpat Rai was in England,** the swadeshi and boycott movement called into existence by Bengali politicians to combat the partition swept the Punjab. As in the United Provinces, Aryas furnished the new swadeshi organizations with members and leadership, but they were reluctant to use the frequently violent boycott tactics of the Bengalis.<sup>43</sup> Militant boycott in Bengal grew out of partition and government repression, but because Punjabis were not confronted by equally burning issues, they saw no reason to divert swadeshi into controversial political channels. Rather, the emphasis on swadeshi

39. Lajpat Rai letter, *Panjabee*, March 6, 1905.

40. *1904 Congress Report* (Bombay, 1905), p. 53; *Bengalee* Dec. 28, 1904.

41. Harkishen Lal letters in *Tribune*, Feb. 6, 1902, March 4, 1902, April 1, 1905.

42. Harkishen Lal letters in *Tribune* April 1, 1905, *Panjabee* April 10, 1905. Also, Lajpat Rai to Gokhale, April 10, 1905, Gokhale Collection (National Archives India, New Delhi).

43. Aryas led 15 of 24 sessions. Statistics drawn from newspaper reports and report in "The Effect of the Anti-Partition Agitation on Provinces Other than Bengal," Govt. of India (hereinafter GI) Public File, June 1906, 169-86A (this and subsequent Indian government proceedings are in the National Archives of India). For the 'nonpolitical' character of the movement, see *Panjabee*, Nov. 3, 1905; MacLagan minute, June 1, 1907, 1907 PGP 10/B.

revived and focused the existing tendency among Aryas to encourage indigenous industry. A second compelling reason for the divergence from Bengali tactics was the Aryas' realization that Muslims might withdraw from the nascent swadeshi organizations if they identified too closely with Bengal or became anti-British. A new generation of Muslim politicians had emerged in the Punjab led by Shah Din and Muhammad Shafi. Although these Muslims opposed the Congress, they had encouraged joint protests with Hindus against Curzon and supported schemes to improve the economic condition of India. The "New Muslim Party," as the British referred to them, was especially active in the new Punjab Swadeshi Association, a nonsectarian body which organized native industry and popularized the use of Indian-made cloth.<sup>44</sup> This cooperation was increasingly endangered by the communal disturbances over boycott in Bengal. Muslims made it clear that if Hindu politicians embraced boycott or identified with Bengali extremism, Muslim collaboration would cease.<sup>45</sup> Arya leaders cared little for a long-term alliance with the Muslims, but they also knew that in a Muslim-majority province, the effectiveness of a swadeshi program would be seriously damaged by a withdrawal of Muslim support.<sup>46</sup>

On his return in November, Lajpat Rai assumed command of the Punjab Congress and pressed militant boycott upon his hesitant followers. Lajpat Rai was willing to alienate the Muslims and a few conservative Hindu politicians because his experience in England had convinced him that only a powerful economic lever such as boycott would affect changes in British policy toward India.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, Lajpat Rai advocated closer identification with Tilak and the Bengali extremists, who were challenging the right of moderate Congressmen to dictate nationalist goals and methodology. Lajpat Rai sympathized with Tilak because the extremist's insistence on the fusion of religion and politics, the use of preachers to reach the masses, and advocacy of a national program of education were similar in many ways to the

44. Dep. Dir. of Police note, July 2, 1903, attached to PG Education File, August 1900, 4A. Also, *Tribune*, Oct. 22, 1905.

45. *Vakil*, Oct. 21, Dec. 13, 1905; *Observer*, Nov. 11, 1905, *Selections from Punjab Press, 1905* (hereinafter *SPP*), pp. 290, 300, 339.

46. For example, Bakshi Ram, *Swadeshi Nazmen aur Ghazlen* (Lahore, 1906), pp. 2, 7.

47. Lajpat Rai to Gokhale, Aug. 8, 1905, Gokhale Collection (hereinafter *GC*); "India and English Politics," *Indian Review*, IV (1905), 750-51. Extracts from

type of program championed by Arya politicians.<sup>48</sup> Lajpat Rai and the Arya-dominated Punjabi delegation at the 1905 Benares session strongly supported Tilak. When Punjabis and portions of the Bengal and Bombay delegations threatened to secede unless the Subjects Committee approved resolutions on boycott and swadeshi, moderates gave way to prevent an open split.<sup>49</sup>

Lajpat Rai continually reaffirmed his extremist position in the early months of 1906. Claiming that boycott was a legitimate political weapon, he called on Punjabi Congressmen to arouse the masses with a deluge of literature and lectures.<sup>50</sup> The *Panjabee* openly attacked the moderates as "self-seekers" defending an "infatuated policy of disgraceful inaction" and supported aggressive boycott. The paper also abandoned all hope of Muslim support and became a militant Hindus organ. It especially championed the Arya Samaj as the protector of Hindus against the wiles of missionaries and the 'bigotry' of Islam.<sup>51</sup>

Shocked by the alliance of the Aryas and the *Panjabee* with Tilak, Harkishen Lal and the conservative trustees of the *Tribune* made their newspaper a spokesman for Punjabi moderates. In early 1906 the *Tribune* urged 'respect for the older hands' of the Congress and separation of boycott and swadeshi.<sup>52</sup> The Bengali editor of the *Tribune* resisted stronger attacks on extremism, and in April the trustees forced him to resign. They appointed in his place Alfred Nundy, a Christian and former assistant secretary of the Congress, who was known for his moderate views and his advocacy of Hindu-Muslim political cooperation. Nundy and Harkishen Lal announced that the *Tribune* would henceforth oppose extremism and the 'Arya Samaj party'.<sup>53</sup>

The ensuing press controversy aroused old rivalries and split the

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his December speeches on swadeshi are in Lajpat Rai dossier, 1907 PGP 10/B.

48. Lajpat Rai to Gokhale, Jan. 27, March 3, 1906, GC; Lajpat Rai to Dwarka Das, Jan. 28, 1908 (intercepted and copied), 1097 PGP 10/B.

49. *Lajpat Rai* pp. 110-11; 1905 *Congress Report* (Lucknow, 1906) pp. 31, 70-75.

50. *Panjabee*, Jan. 13, 1906.

51. *Panjabee*, Jan. 10, 13, Feb. 24, 1906.

52. For example, *Tribune*, March 7, 1906.

53. *Tribune* April 13, 1906; Harkishen Lal letter, June 27, 1906. Nundy's views are in "Mahomedans and Political Agitations," *Kayastha Samachar*, IV (1901), 366-76; "A Silent Revolution in India," *East and West*, II (1903), 906-1007.

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Punjab Congress into moderate and extremist camps. On the basis of reports and correspondence in the *Tribune* and the *Punjabee*, it is clear that Aryas formed the nucleus of the large extremist party, with strong support from Hindu politicians who joined the Aryas in swadeshi projects. The composition of Lajpat Rai's party and the absence of a vital grievance, however, made the Punjab variety of extremism quite different from that of Bengal. The institutions that Lajpat Rai controlled—the Indian Association and a chain of swadeshi organizations—did not change in character; except for verbal attacks on the British and editorial support for Tilak, the extremists carried on approximately the same type of swadeshi and self-help programs as before the split.<sup>54</sup> The lawyers and commercial leaders following Lajpat Rai were conservative by inclination and profession. They could sympathize with Bengal and join extremists in Congress debates, but because they were not confronted by an issue such as partition, the Punjab extremists were unwilling to withdraw from government service, boycott the courts, or go to jail. The *Tribune* or moderate faction was composed of a few prominent Hindu politicians such as Harkishen Lal and Kanhiya Lal, the many enemies of Lajpat Rai, and Aryas who opposed close affiliation of their organization with extremist politics.<sup>55</sup>

Lajpat Rai was surprised at the virulent moderate opposition, and fearing that continued controversy would imperil the growth of constructive political programs, he made an effort to heal the schism in the Punjab Congress.<sup>56</sup> The October provincial conference at Ambala gave Lajpat Rai the opportunity to reconcile the moderates. By minimizing doctrinal differences and appealing for unity, Lajpat Rai won moderate support for the establishment of District Congress branches which would carry on systematic agitation over "meaningful" issues such as income tax rates, British *zulum* (oppression), and *begar* (forced impressment for official service). At the same meeting Lajpat Rai also tried to regain Muslim political support by assuring Muslims that the Punjab Congress would remain nonsectarian and emphasize broad issues pertaining to the entire educated class.<sup>57</sup>

54. Based on meeting reports in the *Tribune* and *Punjabee*, July-Oct. 1906.

55. Harkishen Lal memo, Aug. 13, 1907, 1907 PGP 11/B.

56. *Ibid.* Also Punjab CID note on Punjab politics, 1906-08, sec. 1 (W.P. CID archives, Lahore). Subsequent Punjab CID reports and minutes, unless otherwise noted are in the CID archives.

57. *The Ambala Provincial Conference of 1906* (Lahore, n.d.), pp. ii-iv, 31-36.

The strategy was successful. Several prominent Muslims led by Fazal-i-Husain established a pro-Congress Muslim League and co-operated in the meetings sponsored by Lajpat Rai.<sup>58</sup> In addition, some of Lajpat Rai's opponents joined the district associations. A few, notably Ram Bhaj Datta and Dharm Das Suri, even spoke at Indian Association meetings in October and November.<sup>59</sup> Although Lajpat Rai and the Aryas sided with Tilak at the 1906 Congress, the truce between Punjabi moderates and extremists emerged intact. Spurred on by the assurances of Lajpat Rai that Punjabi politicians could learn from both political camps, Aryas and Hindu moderates cooperated in spreading the Congress movement to the *mofussil*. By February of 1907 the Punjab Congress had branches in over twenty district towns.<sup>60</sup>

Between 1899 and 1907 Punjabi Aryas had thus contributed significantly to the growth and spread of the provincial Congress. Although the Arya preoccupation with practical politics and efficient methods for the regeneration of India had led the Punjab Congress into alliance with the extremists, Lajpat Rai and his lieutenants had been able to reconcile a number of diverse political interests and seemed in 1907 on the verge of forming a strong nationalist party with a firm institutional base. The 1907 disturbances, however, dramatically altered the Punjab political situation. The disturbances and the resulting official policy of coercion and conciliation paved the way for the temporary ascendancy of the moderates and led to the disintegration of the Punjab Congress. Moreover, the communal tension aroused by the disturbances drove Aryas once more to a militant defence of themselves and the general Hindu community. The establishment of two communal organizations, the *shuddhi* sabhas and the Hindu sabhas, was to remove any possibility of permanent political rapprochement between Hindu and Muslim Punjabis.

The agitation and riots in the Punjab during 1907 were generally unrelated incidents arising from a multitude of causes. An ill-considered Colonization Bill, which altered contracts in the canal colonies

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58. Sec. Note: Hindu-Muslim Politics, sec. 2, 1908 PGP bundle (W. P. R. O.). Muharram Ali Chisti and other pro-Congress Muslims also established a second organization, the Anjuman-i-Naib-i-Mussalmani, to present grievances of Muslims to the government and to cooperate with the Aryas leading the Congress, *Tribune*, October 19, 1906.

59. Meeting reports, *Tribune*, Oct. 12, 20, 1906.

60. Lajpat Rai letter, *Panjabee*, Feb. 9, 1907; Punjab CID report, Feb. 20, 1907.

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and extended the role of government in the lives of the colonists, created widespread discontent in the central districts. Educated Hindus and Muslims residing in the colonies worked up a wholly rural agitation against the bill and popularized the tactic of withholding land revenue from the government. Other rural politicians in the Lahore district agitated against an equally unwise government act—enhancement of the Bari Doab canal rates at a time when zamindars along the canal were economically threatened by crop failure and a labor shortage.<sup>61</sup> Unlike the Colonization Bill demonstrations, however, the latter agitation was partially organized by a revolutionary, Ajit Singh. Working through an organization called the Anjuman-i-Muhibban-i-Watan (Society of the Lovers of Homeland), Ajit Singh and a few followers held enormous meetings in Lahore and preached the doctrine of non-cooperation. Ajit Singh also went on lecture tours during which he denounced the British in virulent language and called for boycott of the army.<sup>62</sup> The new district associations added their voice to the growing cry against the government, championing local issues such as revenue assessment and low wages for railway employees.<sup>63</sup> The prosecution of the *Panjabee* for disseminating racial hatred set the spark to the mounting unrest and precipitated the April 16th Lahore riot. On hearing that the Chief Court confirmed the lengthy jail sentences of the paper's editor and registered proprietor, a mob of students stormed through the Lahore streets and attacked Englishmen.<sup>64</sup> Two weeks later an equally violent riot erupted in Rawalpindi, an important Punjab garrison. P. D. Agnew, a rash district officer known for his undisguised contempt of educated Punjabis, called a public meeting on the 2nd of May to discuss charges that local lawyers had chaired a seditious meeting. A crowd, fed in size by a strike at a nearby government factory, gathered outside the courthouse. Agnew arrived later, announced that the hearing was postponed, and again an angry mob momentarily took command of a

61. Based on the following; Popham Young note, in Minto to Morley, July 3, 1907, Morley Collection (Eur. Mss. D 573, India Office); noting and report of colonization committee, GI Revenue File, April 1909, 1-4A; noting and correspondence, GI Revenue File, June 1908, 15B.

62. CID note on Ajit Singh and appendices, GI Home-Political (hereinafter GIPOL) File, Aug. 1907, 148-235A.

63. For example, reports in *Tribune*, March 15, 1907; *Panjabee*, March 27, 1907.

64. *Civil and Military Gazette* (hereinafter *Gazette*), April 17, 18, 1907. Also, riot trial evidence, *Tribune*, June-Aug. 1907.



major Punjab city.<sup>65</sup>

The British initially responded to this unrest with a policy of coercion, followed later by conciliation. The Lieutenant-Governor, Denzil Ibbetson, could not differentiate between constitutional agitation such as meetings and petitions, and extremist methods such as rioting and nonpayment of revenue. Schooled in the autocratic tradition of the Punjab, he considered any challenge to authority and *izzat* (honor) as 'treason' that must be summarily stamped out. Relying upon inaccurate reports, he told the Viceroy, Lord Minto, that Ajit Singh and Lajpat Rai headed a Hindu-Arya plot to overturn the government. Ibbetson asked for coercive measures to meet the conspiracy.<sup>66</sup> Minto and his council lacked adequate information, but trusting Ibbetson and wishing to 'back the man on the spot,' they sanctioned deportation of the two politicians and passed an ordinance banning public meetings in selected Punjab districts. John Morley, the Secretary of State for India, and the India Council disliked coercion but supported Minto.<sup>67</sup> In the meantime Ibbetson had taken additional steps to root out 'sedition.' He arranged mass trials in Lahore and Rawalpindi for the Hindus and Aryas suspected of 'planning the riots.' He also issued circulars warning officers that Hindus and Aryas 'as a class' tended to be seditious and should be employed "only with the greatest care and scrutiny," Aryas in key posts should be watched and dismissed at the least sign of disloyalty.<sup>68</sup> After Ibbetson returned to England for an operation, Minto realized that the provincial government had not correctly assessed the causes of the disturbances and moved toward conciliation. He vetoed the Colonization Act in order to end the rural unrest and the disaffection of Punjabi troops who had relatives in the colonies.<sup>69</sup> Morley later forced Minto to free the deportees, and the last vestige of coercion was removed by the judicial decision to free most of the accused rioters on trial in Lahore and

65. *Lajpat Rai* pp. 124-25. Agnew evidence, *Gazette* June 8, 1907.

66. PG to GI, 694, 695, May 3, 1907, GIPOL Aug. 1907, 148-235A. For Ibbetson's political views, see minute, Aug. 1, 1903, GI Judicial File, May 1906, 196-200A; Ibbetson to PG, March 7, 1889 GI Judicial File, Dec. 1891, 234-300A.

67. Minto to Lady Minto, May 9, 1907, Minto Collection (National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh); noting in GIPOL Aug. 1907, 148-235A; Morley to Minto May 9, 1907, Morley Collection; Diary of F.A. Hirtzel, May 8, 10, 1907, pp. 42-43, Home Miscellaneous Series 864 (India Office).

68. Confidential circular 715, May 7, 1907, 1907 PGP 10/B.

69. Minto minute; May 26, 1907, GI Legislative File June 1907, 4-8A.

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Rawalpindi.<sup>70</sup>

Coercion and conciliation contributed to a temporary resurgence of moderate politics in the Punjab. The repression and rumors of mass arrests so badly frightened the Arya followers of Lajpat Rai that they went into hiding and did not participate in political activities for six months.<sup>71</sup> Harkishen Lal and the moderate Congressmen took advantage of the extremist eclipse and reasserted their political leadership. Harkishen Lal's attempt to win extremists over to his side was aided by sympathetic Englishmen who bridged the social gap between themselves and educated Punjabis which, during past years, had fostered suspicion and racial antagonism. The Colonization Act veto and the riot case judgments also strengthened the moderate case for "British justice."<sup>72</sup> By late August Harkishen Lal had gained control of the Lahore Indian Association and daily won the support of more local politicians. Close friends of Lajpat Rai, even Aryas, were beginning to side with the Punjab moderate party and Gokhale.<sup>73</sup>

The return of Lajpat Rai in November did not reverse the tide running in favour of moderation. Although Lajpat Rai was still attracted to Tilak and extremist tactics, he knew that a defence of his former position in the face of moderate strength might undermine his political influence. Lajpat Rai also sympathized with the moderates due to his mistaken belief that Gokhale had been instrumental in ending the deportation.<sup>74</sup> Lajpat Rai consequently refused to be an extremist candidate for the presidency of the 1907 Congress and did not contest the attacks on extremism made at an Indian Association meeting which elected Punjab delegates for the Surat session.<sup>75</sup> At Surat the Punjabis co-operated with Gokhale and joined the moderate National Conference after the split. Lajpat Rai addressed the Conference, and he and Harkishen Lal were named secretaries of a Punjab branch of

70. Morley telegram to Minto, Nov. 2, 1907, Minto Collection; Martineau judgments Oct. 1, 2, 1907, GIPOL Jan. 1908, 64-72A.

71. Tek Chand to Gokhale, May 10, 1907, GC; Punjab CID reports, May 24, June 1, 1907. Also, *Punjabee*, Aug 31, 1907.

72. Robertson to Ibbetson, Aug. 23, 1907, 1907 PGP 14/B. For the Punjabi attitude, see *Punjabee*, Sept. 14, 1907; *Tribune*, Nov. 8, 1907.

73. Punjab CID reports, Aug. 19, Sept. 16, 1907; Hans Raj Sawney to Gokhale, Oct. 7, 15, 1907, GC.

74. Lajpat Rai to Gokhale, Nov. 3, 1907 (should read Dec. 3), GC.

75. Lajpat Rai letter, *Tribune* Dec. 17, 1907; Punjab CID report, Dec. 21, 1907.

the moderate Congress.<sup>76</sup>

Lajpat Rai's indecision after the Surat session sparked a challenge to his leadership by Punjabi moderates and helped precipitate the disintegration of the Punjab Congress. Lajpat Rai was not satisfied in his new role as a moderate because he feared that the National Conference had no intention of carrying out 'constructive' political work. During a January lecture tour in Bombay, he publicly sympathized with Tilak and charged the moderates with 'mistreating' the extremist leader.<sup>77</sup> Jealous of Lajpat Rai and also fearful that he might revert to extremism, Harkishen Lal tried to discredit the Arya politician before he could regain the political authority which he held before the deportation. The *Tribune* publicized the inconsistencies in Lajpat Rai's speeches and claimed he was "playing both sides."<sup>78</sup> Lajpat Rai denied the allegations, but he was unable to give unequivocal support to either the moderates or extremists. Disillusioned with both Congress camps and distressed by the *Tribune* attacks, Lajpat Rai permitted Harkishen Lal to control the Indian Association and the Punjab Congress.<sup>79</sup> Finally in August of 1908, hounded by police spies and the center of continual controversy, the former leader of Punjab politics turned his back on the province and journeyed to England. He left behind a Punjab Congress split and devoid of spirit and leadership. Many Aryas and Punjabi Hindus lost interest in the fragmented Congress because they felt the organization had no future. In the words of Lal Chand, an Arya politician, the extremists were "moving toward revolution" while the moderates "championed a program devoid of practicality and based on unquestioning loyalty."<sup>80</sup> Moreover, Harkishen Lal's determination to eliminate Lajpat Rai and extremism as political forces renewed old controversies and alienated the bulk of the Aryas who continued to revere Lajpat Rai. One by one they with-

76. *The Surat Congress and Conferences* (Madras, 1908), pp. xxiv-xxv; *Gazette*, Dec. 31, 1907.

77. Lajpat Rai to Dwarka Das, Jan. 28, 1908, 1907 PGP 14/B. Also, *Tribune* Jan. 29, 1908.

78. Harkishen Lal memo, Feb. 18, 1908, 1907 PGP 14/B. An example of the attacks is *Tribune*, Jan. 18, 1908. The government apparently encouraged his attempts to discredit Lajpat Rai.

79. Lajpat Rai to Hans Raj Sawnhey, March 1, 1908 (intercepted and copied), 1907 PGP 10/B. Also, Lajpat Rai's comments on the attacks, Lajpat Rai to Gokhale Jan. 28, 1908, GC.

80. Dane interview with Lal Chand, Feb. 9, 1909, Keep-With, 1907 PGP 14/B.

drew from the Punjab Congress committee and the district associations. Only half a dozen Punjabis, close friends of Harkishen Lal, attended the 1908 Madras session.<sup>81</sup> Harkishen Lal made one last attempt to interest Punjabis in the moderate Congress and failed dramatically. After inviting the 1909 Congress to Lahore, he could not find members for a reception committee. The Aryas attacked the project and boycotted the session.<sup>82</sup> Harkishen Lal then drifted from politics into banking and industry. Split and without leadership, the Punjab Congress—like its parent organization the Indian National Congress—fell asleep, left with only an ever-dimming memory of the brief but fiery activities preceding the 1907 disturbances.

With the decline of the Punjab Congress, Punjab politics assumed a communal character. A significant legacy of the disturbances was a sharp rise in Hindu-Muslim tension and a renewal of Arya interest in organizations to defend themselves and the larger Hindu community.

The intimate association of individual Aryas with the Congress and the arrest of many Aryas during the May 'reign of terror' afforded the Arya Samaj's enemies a rich opportunity to label it as anti-British and seditious. For example, a rival Hindu sect, the Sanatan Dharam, charged the Samaj with spreading revolution and "disseminating hatred"<sup>83</sup> Muslim politicians had a more pragmatic reason for picturing Aryas as enemies of the government. The economic sanctions against the Arya Samaj were common knowledge by the middle of May because a Muslim official had leaked Ibbetson's employment circulars to the press.<sup>84</sup> Muslim leaders wished to reinforce this official view in the expectation that their coreligionists would benefit from the resulting redistribution of jobs. Muslim public meetings and Muslim newspapers consequently demanded that 'seditious Aryas' be expelled from their government posts.<sup>85</sup>

The employment circulars and the mounting charge of sedition posed a definite economic threat to the Aryas. If the charges were accepted as fact, and if the British continued to be hostile, Arya

81. Punjab CID note on Punjab politics, 1906-1908, sec. 3.

82. Punjab CID reports, March 13, June 28, 1909 *Tribune*, July 5, 1909.

83. *Sanatan Dharm Gazette*, June 12, July 10, 1907, *SPP. 1907*, pp. 253, 269, Also, ArurSingh notification, GIPOL July 1907, 39-117B.

84. MacLagan minute, Aug. 1, 1907, 1907 PGP 10/B.

85. Insha Allah letter, *Gazette*, June 2, 1907; S. Muhammad Husan, *Aryon ki Kartut* (Sialkot, 1907), pp. 2-3.

domination of the public services would abruptly end. They responded to the threat by trying to show that neither the Arya Samaj nor Arya politicians were disloyal. Arya leaders first attempted to prove that the Samaj was not interested in politics by quoting passages from its literature showing that the organization had always been concerned with reform and education. When this defence proved ineffectual, Aryas publicly dissociated themselves from individuals linked to the disturbances. They denounced Ajit Singh, whom Muslims claimed was a disciple of Dayananda, as an atheist. A rumor that the British planned to disaffiliate Arya schools even drove a few Aryas to sever relations with Lajpat Rai.<sup>86</sup> In the meantime prominent Aryas had discussed the situation and took steps to demonstrate conclusively that the Samaj was not involved in politics. The governing body of the Arya Samaj, the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, published a resolution in late May which stated that the movement was religious and had no connections with "any political body or with political agitation in any shape."<sup>87</sup> Aryas also met with the Bishop of Lahore, Bishop Lefroy, and following his advice formed a deputation to meet with Denzil Ibbetson. Ibbetson replied to the Arya claim that they were only religious reformers by noting that wherever there was a Samaj, agitation abounded. He said that the Arya Samaj should have "disclaimed sedition" much earlier and banned politicians from its membership. Harkishen Lal was overjoyed that the British refused to believe his enemies, the Aryas, and printed a verbatim copy of the interview. The spokesman for Arya politicians, the *Panjabee*, savagely denounced the deputation as an "uncalled for protestation of loyalty," as did other prominent Hindu papers.<sup>88</sup> Despite these protests and the failure of the deputation, Arya leaders again tried to prove their loyalty in mid-June by publishing a letter stating that the Samaj was a "non-political body."<sup>89</sup>

By the end of June Aryas felt that their campaign to convince the British of Arya loyalty and good intentions had been totally unsuccessful. Growing desperate over real and imagined sanctions and stung by the persistent charges of sedition, they then struck out at

86. M.S. Bhagat letter, *Gazette*, May 18, 1907; Diwan Chand letter, *Gazette*, May, 25, 1907; Durga Das letter, *Panjabee*, June 12, 1907.

87. Resolution, annotated, 1907 PGP 11/B.

88. *Tribune*, May 28, 30, 1907; *Panjabee*, May 29, 1907.

89. *Gazette*, June 12, 1907

their Muslim accusers. Muslims were painted as greedy job seekers who called Hindus and Aryas seditious in order to secure posts which under normal conditions they did not have the ability to win. Another favourite accusation was that the Koran demanded that Muslims rebel against the British.<sup>90</sup> Excellent propagandists, the Aryas prepared vernacular pamphlets attacking Islamic culture and smearing the reputation of leading Muslims. The Muslims countered with equally virulent propaganda. The resulting communal tension, according to an informed Punjab officer, exceeded even that of the period preceding the 1897 murder of Lekh Ram.<sup>91</sup>

During the summer several government measures intensified the feeling of persecution among Aryas and Hindus and generated discussions of how they could strengthen their mutual political position. An incident in Abbotabad, for example, seemed to indicate that the British consistently favored the 'loyal Muslims.' When the head of the local Arya Samaj, Dhani Ram Rai, insulted a Muslim in July, the predominately Muslim population became so excited that Dhani Ram was deported "for his own protection" under the Frontier Crimes Regulation. Aryas and educated Hindus, whom Muslims had also charged with causing the disturbances, considered the action an attack on their communities.<sup>92</sup> The announcement of the proposed Morley-Minto reforms in August tended to confirm the fear that the British supported Muslim claims and drove Hindus and Aryas to explore the possibility of forming a communal political association. "Official persecution" and the "separate electorates for the Muslims," one Arya observed, signified that "the time has come" for the two communities to "organise and protect themselves."<sup>93</sup>

Following the announcement of the constitutional proposals, a leading Arya lawyer, Ram Bhaj Datta, suggested that the Hindu Sahaik *sabhas*, Hindu cultural organizations, begun in 1906 to promote "brotherly feelings among" the divergent Hindu sects, be transformed

90. Letters in *Tribune*, June 19, 1907. Also, *Muslimān ke Bare Men* (Jullundur, n.d.), pp. 3-4.

91. Sec. minute, July 21, 1907, 1907 PGP 10/B. Also, Punjab CID reports on communal tension, July 27, Aug. 9, 1907.

92. Punjab CID reports, Aug. 23, 24, 1907. For the Arya and Hindu response, *Gazette*, Aug. 8, 14, 1907; *Sat Dharm Parcharak*, Aug. 30, *Arya Gazette*, Sept. 5, 1907, *SPP* 1907, p. 365.

93. Ram Bhaj Datta to Shadi Lal, Aug. 30, 1907 (intercepted and copied), 1907 PGP 14/B.

into political organizations which would rally Aryas and Hindus against Muslim militancy and British 'favoritism.'<sup>94</sup> His proposal was widely debated during September and October but met strong opposition from several leading Aryas such as Lal Chand who felt that for the time being the most advantageous strategy was to avoid open connection with agitation.<sup>95</sup> Continued concern over British policy toward Muslims and the creation of an anti-Hindu Muslim League, however, finally led to the acceptance of Ram Bhaj Datta's proposal in the spring of 1908. Fresh discussion of the reforms and the appointment of Shah Din to the Punjab Chief Court instead of a more senior Hindu judge, Lajpat Rai wrote to Gokhale, convinced Hindus that they must organize to protect their interests.<sup>96</sup> The formation and rapid spread of the Punjab Muslim League reinforced this tendency. Muslims had formed the new League in December of 1907 to put pressure upon the government for special grants and additional seats in the legislative council. Punjabi Hindus believed that they must organize systematically as a counterpoise to the Muslim associations.<sup>97</sup>

The Hindu sabhas moved into the political arena and displaced the district associations as spokesmen for Punjabi Hindus. The local Congress branches had been nominally secular, although their leaders and members were generally Hindu. In their place emerged Hindu sabhas, avowedly communal organizations determined to protect Hinduism at any cost. By the summer of 1908 each district had a Hindu sabha affiliated with the Punjab Hindu Sabha in Lahore. When Hindus protested against incidents in the Transvaal or against bombings by Bengali terrorists, they usually channeled their memorials through the Punjab Hindu Sabha. It also served as a rallying point for a multitude of Hindu protests over education and employment issues in 1908 and 1909.<sup>98</sup> Aryas led the new sabhas. Having abandoned the

94. *Ibid.*, Background on the sabhas drawn from *Tribune*, Aug. 24, Sept. 8, 1906, *Gazette*, Dec. 16, 22, 1906.

95. Sec. Note: Hindu-Muslim Politics, sec. 2, 1908 PGP bundle (W.P.R.O.). This information was apparently given to the British in 1901 by Shadi Lal.

96. Lajpat Rai to Gokhale, June 3, 1908 (intercepted and copied), 1907 PGP 14/B. Also, Lajpat Rai to Hans Raj Sawney, March, 1 1908, same file.

97. *Tribune* Dec. 11, 1907; Punjab CID report, Dec. 2, 1907.

98. Analysis of meeting reports from *Tribune*, Feb.-May 1908. Also, memorials in GIPOL, Oct. 1908, 29-31A.

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Congress, the Aryas threw themselves into the communal associations and dominated the pan-Hindu political movement by the time the All-India Hindu Sabha was formed in 1909.<sup>99</sup>

Punjabi Aryas also intensified their efforts to defend Hinduism and to attack Islam by spreading the *shuddhi* sabhas, organizations which reclaimed Muslim and Christian converts. During the eighteen nineties the Arya Samaj had brought a few outcastes and converts back into the Hindu fold, but only after the 1907 disturbances did it actually make widespread reconversions. Putting outcastes and Muslims through Vedic rituals, the Samaj 'cleansed' them of impurity and welcomed them into the ranks of the twice-born. In 1909 an Agra meeting inaugurated the All-India Shuddhi Sabha. The Sabha was primarily led by Punjabi Aryas and had close connections with the Hindu Sabha.<sup>100</sup> Each had the same mission—defence of Hinduism—and each had the same motivation—attacks on the Hindu community and a growing fear that the government was pro-Muslim. The Mahasabha tried to organize the Hindu sects and presented petitions to the British supporting Hindu interests on controversial issues. Its arm, the Shuddhi Sabha, also attempted to unify the Hindu community and to expand the Hindu population by active proselytism. Both aroused Muslim anger and accelerated Muslim organization of their own defence associations. The four decades between 1907 and 1947 were marked by communal unrest and occasional improvement of Hindu-Muslim relations, but the seeds of religious rivalry and communal organization which were to bear fruit in the partition had been decisively sown.

99. Drawn from membership lists, attached to Sec. Note: Hindu-Muslim Politics, 1908 PGP (W.P.R.O.). The Arya role in the All-India Hindu Mahasabha is briefly mentioned in Indra Prakash, *A Review of the History and Work of the Hindu Mahasabha and the Hindu Sanghatan Movement* (3rd. ed; Delhi, 1952), pp. 13-15.

100. Punjab CID reports, April 10, 1908 Feb. 22, 1909. Earlier *shuddhi* programs and their relation to communal antagonism are analyzed in Jones, "Arya Samaj," chs. 3-5.



## Akali Involvement in the Nabha Affair

MOHINDER SINGH\*

The abdication of Maharaja Ripudaman Singh of Nabha and the S.G.P.C.'s involvement in the affair is one of the most controversial issues. While there is no denying that the Maharaja had closer affiliations with the Akalis and other nationalists of the time, the common belief that he was deprived of his throne mainly because of his having championed the Akali cause for Gurdwara reform is only partially true.

A study of the early career and activities of the Maharaja<sup>1</sup> reveals that he had come to acquire an independent and nationalistic outlook as a young prince. While still in his early twenties he gave an ample evidence of his feelings for the national aspirations. As a member of the Viceroy's Legislative Council (1906-08), he openly aligned himself with the non-official members like Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Rash Behari Ghose and became an acknowledged spokesman of the national viewpoint. He was also responsible for the introduction of the Anand Marriage Bill in the Council which aimed at simplifying the Sikh marriage ceremony. In February, 1907, he took up the cause of a Sikh *Granthi* of the 14th Sikhs who had been unjustly dismissed because, while sitting in attendance on the holy *Granth*, he did not Salaam an English officer. A few days later he wanted to ask a question about the injury done to the religious feelings of the Sikhs by Dr. Trumpp's<sup>2</sup> translation of the *Adi Granth*. Similarly in affairs of national importance he always sided with the nationalists and championed the cause of the Indians.

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1. Born on March 4, 1883, Ripudaman Singh was sixth ruler in the line of succession of the House of Nabha. He succeeded to *gaddi* on January, 24, 1912.
2. A German missionary, Dr. Ernest Trumpp, was employed by the Govt. of India to prepare the English translation of the *Adi Granth*. His work, according to M.A. Macauliffe, "was highly inaccurate and unidiomatic and further more gave mortal offence to the Sikhs by the odium theologicum introduced into it." Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion*, Vol. I, p. vii.

#### AKALI INVOLVEMENT IN THE NABHA AFFAIR

Speaking in the Council the following year on the question of relations between the Indians and the Europeans he had the courage to speak the truth that "the European officers do not often show due courtesy and politeness either in writing or in conversation to Indian gentlemen. This ignorance of Indian manners, customs, religions, languages and etiquette, which they do not trouble to study and consider not worth their while to learn, is a growing evil"<sup>3</sup> He advocated the association of Indians with higher administration of the country. During the discussion on the Seditious Meetings Bill he did not lend his support to the Government.

The things, however, did not end here. His succession to the throne of Nabha was marked by a serious conflict with the Govt. He raised a strong objection against the custom of placing Indian princes on their *gaddi* by an Agent of the British Government. The Maharaja believed that his succession, which was flawless in law as well as usage, was a matter of right and valid without any British sanction or ceremony. Thus when the Political Agent for the Phoolkian States, Mr. C.H. Atkins, wrote to the Maharaja on March 22, 1912 "I am to place the necklace round Your Highness's neck, to fasten the *sarpech* on Your Highness's turban and to bind the sword on Your Highness's person,"<sup>4</sup> the Maharaja wrote back that all this was unacceptable to him. In his coronation speech he told the Political Agent that he had agreed to the installation ceremony under protest and reserved to himself the right to appeal to the Secretary of State for India.

Brought up in the modern democratic school and a man of stubborn and tenacious will, as he was, the Maharaja took special pleasure in challenging the authority of the British officers whenever he could. When the Lt.-Governor of Punjab, Sir Louis Dane, wished to pay a visit to the Maharaja, he curtly replied that it was not possible for him "to receive a visit from His Honour"<sup>5</sup>. He also earned the displeasure of the Government because of his close affiliations with the national movement and the leaders of his day. During the foundation

3. Legislative Council Proceedings, March, 1908.

4. Letter dated 22nd March, 1912, from the Political Agent Phoolkian States to the Maharaja of Nabha, File No. 18, (Chief Minister, Nabha) PGRO.

5. Letter dated 11th January, 1913, from Maharaja Ripudaman Singh of Nabha to Mr. C. H. Atkins, Pol. Agent, Phoolkian States. *Nabha Affairs (1912-17) Pvt. Confd.*, p. 1.

laying ceremony of the Banaras Hindu University, when all the Indian princes left the meeting in protest against the speech of Mahatma Gandhi, the lone Indian prince who had the courage to watch the deliberations till its close was Ripudaman Singh. Again at a Tilak Memorial meeting held at Mussouri, the Maharaja not only presided over it but also expressed his sincere regards for the great leader and contributed to the Memorial Fund. When after the Nankana tragedy, the Akali Dal gave a call to observe the 5th April, 1921, as the 'Nankana Sahib Day' the Maharaja responded to it by foregoing food for the day, donning a black turban and sleeping on the ground.

Conscious of his own rights and privileges as a prince he resented the unwarranted interference of the Government of India in the internal affairs of his state. This, he thought, was violation of the Treaty Rights conferred upon him. Thus when after a meeting in this connection on the 4th and 5th of February, 1918, the Viceroy desired "to bring to notice any cases in which they consider that there has been a failure to fulfil pledges given by the British Govt,"<sup>6</sup> the Nabha Durbar furnished a long list of instances of such violations enlisting *inter-alia* the defects in the procedure on occasions of the reception of the ruler, entertaining claims from Nabha subjects and harbouring and encouraging state servants and deserters and taking unauthorised possession of land."<sup>7</sup>

The Maharaja had thus incurred serious displeasure of the British officials and their pent-up wrath found a vantage hole in the Patiala-Nabha dispute.<sup>8</sup> While the two princes were busy in sorting out their differences through the efforts of Sir Ali Imam, the Government appointed Mr. Justice Stuart to hold an enquiry. That his independent nature and the hallow of personality that the Maharaja had come to acquire was an eye-sore to the British is evident from an important line in the Report, "Ever since the Maharaja of Nabha succeeded his father, the Government of India have had abundant proof that the whole policy of the State has been dominated by his person-

6. Confidential letter No. 205 CA, dated 12th April, 1918, from the Political Agent to the Foreign Minister, Nabha, *Confidential Papers*, SGPC.

7. Ibid, pp. 8-9.

8. Relations between the two Maharajas became strained because of some territorial disputes and extradition of offenders in addition to the murder of one Lal Singh and disappearance of a woman named Ishar Kaur.

#### AKALI INVOLVEMENT IN THE NABHA AFFAIR

ality".<sup>9</sup> In his findings Mr. Stuart held both the princes guilty of one offence or the other. It is strange that while the Maharaja of Patiala escaped punishment, Ripudaman Singh was made to abdicate in favour of his minor son on the 9th of July, 1923, and was removed to Dehra Dun. As to the nature of his 'abdication' it is not within the scope of this paper to go into details.<sup>10</sup> What is important here to discuss is the question as to whether the Maharaja was made to abdicate because of his sympathies with the Akalis as is commonly believed and whether the Akalis were, legally and technically speaking, competent to take up the question of his restoration. As has been discussed at length in the preceding pages, the Maharaja had incurred enough displeasure and disaffection of the British Government because of his stubborn and tenacious will combined with his unyielding and abrasive style of expression.<sup>11</sup> His long and continued associations with the nationalists, even when he had ceased to be a member of the Viceroy's Council, could not be relished by the Government. His deposition was the outcome of bad impression that the British officials had come to form of him mainly because of the intrigues and machinations of his unfaithful officials and his politically shrewd opponent, the Maharaja of Patiala. A ruler of his type would have had a precarious lien to the throne. His associations with

9. File No. 298 (Chief Minister, Nabha), PGRO.

10. The Maharaja in his letter dated 14th Dec., 1923, to the Viceroy emphasises more than once how he was intimidated by his self-seeking officials and the Political Agent, "I was driven into the presence of the Agent by clever schemers and it was he who *demand*ed *abdication* from me threatening worse and dire consequences in case of my non-compliance". File No. 18 P.G.R.O. This use of force is evident from the letter dated 4th July, 1923, that Minchin wrote to the Viceroy. While justifying the show of force Minchin writes, "The Maharaja is a coward at heart and it only requires reasonable show of force to secure his submission."

A careful perusal of a large number of letters of the British officials in the Punjab to the Viceroy will leave an impartial student of history in no doubt about the nature of Maharaja's abdication. It was under great pressure and clever manoeuvres of the Agent for the Phoolkian States that the Maharaja signed the letter of abdication. In another D. O. letter No. 794-c, dated the July, 1923, Col. Minchin informed the Viceroy, "Mr. O'Grady tells me that he had great difficulty in inducing H. H. to sign the letter." (*Nabha Affairs*, N.A.I.). Soon after the signing of the document the Maharaja realised his mistake and sent his fastest car to get the document back. But it was too late.

11. Conscious of his independent nature the Maharaja admits "the root-cause of my troubles is the want of blind obedience." File No. 18, PGRO.

the Akalis might have hastened his severance with the administration of his state, but his dissociation with them could not have stopped it either.

About the competency of the SGPC taking up the 'Nabha issue,' opinions differed from the very beginning. Some of the members of the SGPC felt that the deposition of the Maharaja of Nabha was a 'Political Issue' and as such the SGPC, which had been formed simply to look after the affairs of the Sikh Gurdwaras, was not competent to take up the question of the restoration of the Maharaja.<sup>12</sup> If the community felt that in deposing the Maharaja the Government had injured the Sikh feelings, the question could then have been taken up by the Sikh League or some other political body. But the extremist Akalis did not bother about the technical and legal niceties and took up the question of the restoration of the Maharaja of Nabha in their hands on the plea that this action of the Government "was a side-attack to suppress the Akali movement" To begin with, it was decided to mobilise the public opinion in support of the Maharaja through press and platform and "peaceful" and "legitimate" were the words used to achieve this result. But the SGPC and the Akali Dal ultimately plunged into the affair by issuing a statement on the 9th of July, 1923, saying "...The hereditary ruler of Nabha was unjustly and forcibly detached from the administration of his state by the Govt. of India."<sup>13</sup> The communique also made serious allegations of arbitrary conduct and high-handedness against the Political Agent. July 29 was fixed as a day of prayer for the restoration of the Maharaja, and September 9 a day for bare-footed protest-march in principal streets of all the important towns of the Punjab. The *Sangats* on such occasions were also urged to pass resolutions condemning the action of the Government and the Political Agent and sending messages of sympathy telegraphically to whatever place the Maharaja might have been removed.<sup>14</sup> On the 2nd of August, 1923, the SGPC sent a long telegram to the Viceroy briefing him as to how the officials of the Nabha state and the Agent to the Phoolkian States, had forced the Maharaja to sign the abdication letter. On the 5th and 6th of August the SGPC passed more resolutions in which the Government was accused of "deli-

12. Out of 37 members only six supported the question of restoration.

13. Press Communique dated 9th July, issued by the SGPC.

14. Press Communiques Nos. 5, 7 and 12, dated 9th, 17th and 22nd August, 1923, respectively, issued by the SGPC.

#### AKALI INVOLVEMENT IN THE NABHA AFFAIR

berately taking the advantage of Patiala Nabha dispute to wrest the administration of Nabha state from the Maharaja.<sup>15</sup> Another resolution authorised the Executive Committee of the SGPC to take up the question of the restoration of the Maharaja by all peaceful and legitimate means.

The resolution said that this action against a Sikh state of great historical and religious traditions and an orthodox and self-respecting Sikh prince was "calculated to give a severe blow to the Panthic orthodoxy, organisation and well-being". The resolution also censured the actions of the Nabha officials for their treacherous role in the deposition of the Maharaja.<sup>16</sup>

The Nabha administration having sensed the Akali feelings over the question of the deposition of the Maharaja and the possibility of an agitation being launched by the SGPC forearmed itself by issuing certain ordinances, prohibiting political meetings in the Nabha State territory to discuss the question of Maharaja's restoration.<sup>17</sup>

Akali defiance of these orders and their holding several *diwans* to discuss the prohibited affair resulted in a big agitation.

Among many *diwans* organised to condemn the Government action and to pray for the restoration of the Maharaja, the one began at Jaito on the 25th of August, 1923. A great procession was taken out on the first day. On the 27th of August the following important resolutions were passed by the diwan :<sup>18</sup>

1. Akali Kahan Singh of Amritsar moved a resolution saying the Diwan expressed feelings of contempt at the oppressive means which the Government had used in deposing the Maharaja of Nabha.
2. The second resolution regretted the arrest of Bhai Sant Singh of Patiala and other Akalis.
3. The third resolution moved by Sardara Singh Akali of Patiala expressed feelings of regret on taking the royal palaces under guard.
4. The fourth resolution moved by Rai Singh of Amritsar con-

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15. SGPC Resolution dated 5th August, 1923.

16. *Ibid.*, dated 6th Aug., 1923.

17. Press Communique dated 13th October, 1923, issued by the Punjab Govt. from Lahore. File No. 28 (Chief Minister, Nabha), PGRO.

18. File No. 70, (Chief Minister, Nabha), PGRO.

demned the actions of disloyal and unfaithful Ahlakars of the Maharaja.

- 5-6. Resolutions condemned the arrest of Rai Singh and criticised the bad behaviour of Tara Singh Sub-Inspector of Police.

The Government arrested the organisers, Akali Inder Singh and others, on the charge of delivering 'political speeches'. This action of the Government offered the Akalis a challenge and the *diwan*, which was originally fixed for three days, came to be prolonged. The Report submitted by the Nazim of Phool, who witnessed all these proceedings and was reporting them to the Nabha authorities, is very relevant in this context :

"The Diwan might have dispersed had not Inder Singh been arrested. Now they have determined to remain here until the departure of state forces. I have also come to know that they have got some promises of help from the SGPC. If it is so, the agitation will not be put down easily."<sup>19</sup>

So far the diwan held at Jaito was a local affair, but this action of the government offended the Sikh feelings and the S.G.P.C. came to the fore. More and more Akalis started pouring in to Jaito, some of whom were the members of the S.G.P.C. The Government retaliated by making more arrests and by declaring the S.G.P.C. and the Akali Dal 'unlawful associations'.<sup>20</sup> On the night of the 13th September, 1923, all the sixty members of the Interim Committee were arrested from different places and were tried for 'treason' against the King-Emperor.<sup>21</sup>

When these arrests were going on, some of the Akalis assembled at Jaito began an *Akhand Path*. Police action of September 14, 1923, in arresting an Akali who was reading the holy *Granth* greatly agitated the Sikhs who felt this was an unprecedented sacrilege and an interference in their religion.<sup>22</sup> Whether the *Path* was actually interrupted

19. *Ibid*, report dated 30th August, 1923.

20. Punjab Govt. orders No. 23772-73, dated 12th Oct., 23, File No. 28 (Chief Minister, Nabha). PGRO.

21. Giani Nahar Singh's article in *Bhai Jodh Singh Abhinandan Granth*, part II, p. 227.

22. There are many divergent opinions about the *Path* being interrupted. Akalis allege that the armed soldiers in uniform literally dragged the man reading the *Granth*. The Govt. reports contradict the Akali charge and assert that the reading was taken up "by a Sikh military sepoy; who was seated near the

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#### AKALI INVOLVEMENT IN THE NABHA AFFAIR

is doubtful but it gave a great commotion to the Sikh community and the news of the alleged desecration spread like wild fire<sup>23</sup>

Jaito, a small town in the Nabha state, thus became the scene of a virulent *morcha*. To vindicate their right to pray for the rehabilitation of the Maharaja and to redeem the sacrilege committed by the police in interrupting the continuous reading of the Holy Book, batches of the Akalis began to march to Jails from the Akal Takht.

From 15th of September, 1923, Akali *Jathas* of 25 each daily walked on foot to Jaito after taking a pledge of non-violence in thought and deed before the Akal Takhat at Amritsar. The aims of these *Jathas* were.<sup>24</sup>

- a) to resume the interrupted *Akhand Path* at Gangsar ;
- b) to suffer in meek and humble spirit all hard-ships and tortures inflicted on them by the proud officials for establishing the Sikh birth-right of free congregation and free worship in all Sikh Gurdwaras.

The Nabha state authorities did not allow the *Jathas* to proceed to the Gurdwara. The Akalis were arrested and after being kept in custody in very unhygienic conditions and without food, were severely beaten and removed to the neighbouring area of Babal Kanti in Rajsthan or to Rewari, some 300 kilo-meters away from Nabha, where

*Continued from page 374]*

*granthi* and continued it to a finish. Sardar Gurdial Singh, Assistant Administrator, Nabha State, in his statement published in the *Pioneer* of Allahabad, refuted the Akali charge of interruption in the *Path*. According to him the *Path* was finished to the end under his orders and the final *Bhog* ceremony was performed in his presence and *Prasad* was offered out of the state funds. According to Giani Nahar Singh the *Path* was taken up by another man of the Nabha State. Prof. R. R. Sahni, another contemporary and eye-witness of a greater part of the struggle, also corroborates this view.

Evidence given by Mir Muhammad Ali, Supdt. of Police, Nabha, in the case *Crown v/s S.S. Mehtab Singh and others*, and the Nazim of Phool mention one Bhai Atma Singh, who took over the *Path* from Inder Singh.

23. On the 29th of September, 1923, the S.G.P.C. passed a comprehensive resolution in five parts condemning the action of the Nabha State authorities in interrupting the *Path*. The resolution held the Government of India responsible for this unbearable insult to the scripture. The resolution further declared S.G.P.C.'s determination to maintain the dignity of their places of worship. The resolution also censured the Govt. for having declared the S.G.P.C, and the Akali Dal as "unlawful associations." In the end the resolution affirmed the S,G,P.C.'s faith in complete non-violence in words and deeds.
24. SGPC Communique No. 94, nd.



they were left in penniless condition to shift for themselves as best as they could.<sup>25</sup> Within a period of seven months this happened to no less than 5000 Akalis.

Failing to achieve any spectacular results and noticing that the struggle was prolonging without making any impression, the S.G.P.C. decided to send bigger *Jathas* to Jaito. On the 9th of February, 1924, a *Shahidi Jatha* of 500 Akalis started from Amritsar on its way to Jaito. The *Jatha* was given warm welcome by all the villagers it met on the way. On the 20th of February, 1924, the *Jatha* reached Bargari, about ten miles away from Jaito. The *Jatha* left for Jaito the next day, 21st of February, at about 12 noon. Here Dr Kitchlew, Principal Gidwani and Mr. Zimand of the *New York Times* also accompanied them. The *Jatha*, according to many observers and eye-witnesses,<sup>26</sup> including some impartial persons like Mr. Zimand, was moving in perfect order and non-violence with large crowds of public on its right and left, and five *Nishan Sahibs* in the front and *Guru Granth* in the middle.<sup>27</sup>

When the *Jatha* reached at a distance of about 150 yards from the Gurdwara Tibbi Sahib, Mr Johnston Wilson, the Administrator of Nabha, arrived and ordered the *Jatha* to stop. He warned that if the *Jatha* did not comply with his instructions, he will order firing.<sup>28</sup> The *Jatha*, which had taken a solemn vow at the Akal Takhat to resume the disrupted *Akhand Path* and to face calmly and non-violently any hardships which may befall them in the achievements of this purpose, continued to move and took a turn to the right in the direction of Tibi Sahib. Noticing the intentions of the *Jatha*, the Administrator gave his signal to open fire. According to a press-observer, Mr S. Zimand of the *New York Times*, it was at 2.25 p.m. that the firing started. "The firing was in regular volleys and there were no desulutory shots."<sup>29</sup> The first round of firing lasted for full two minutes, i. e., from 2.45 to 2.47 p.m. The second round started

25. Giani Nahar Singh, *Akali Lehar*, published in *The Punjab*.

26. There are many an eye-witness account quoted by the SGPC in the *Confidential Papers*, pp. 37-45

27. *Confid. Papers* 37-45

28. According to the Judgement in the *Jaito Firing Case*, a notice was served on the *Jatha* by the Nabha authorities prohibiting their entry into the state territories, File No. 221, p. 47 (Chief Minister, Nabha) PGRO.

29. S. Zimand's letter to Mahatma Gandhi, dated 9th April, 1924, quoted in the *Quarterly Register*, April, 1924.

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at 2.55 and it lasted for full three minutes.<sup>30</sup> This, according to another contemporary, was a "scene unique in the history of the world for calm restraint, the cool courage and a remarkable capacity for suffering in a righteous cause displayed by Sikh victims of official fury."<sup>31</sup> The Jatha, which from the very beginning knew the risk involved in their march, was not deterred and continued its onward march under a shower of bullets. Many of them fell dead or wounded; but lifting them up the rest of the members went straight to Tibbi Sahib. Bullets poured upon them from all directions. According to Mr Zimand the dead and wounded were left uncared for. "It was at this juncture that Dr Kitchlew and Mr Gidwani decided to motor to Jaito in order that they might take care of the wounded."<sup>32</sup> According to the SGPC version of the incident, "the Sikhs were checked by the army men from removing the dead and the wounded and thus many of the wounded died for lack of attendance and water".<sup>33</sup> In the words of other eye-witnesses, "The dead and wounded from amongst the *Sangat* were seen scattered in the corn-fields. Medical staff travelling with the Jatha and the store of medicine, etc. were taken in custody..."<sup>34</sup> According to the statement of Mr Gulab Singh, "Dr Kehar Singh, in charge of the medical arrangements of the Jatha, was also arrested."<sup>35</sup> Cavalry was employed to beat the rest of the Jatha. After beating them to senselessness and tying them with strong ropes the Akalis were huddled into bullock carts to be transported to the barbed wire enclosures, from where they were subsequently taken to the fort.

Opinions differ regarding number of casualties. The exact number of dead and wounded could not be ascertained as the scene of tragedy was made inaccessible to independent observers and press reporters like Dr Kitchlew, Principal Gidwani and Mr Zimand. The SGPC reports claim that there were over three hundred casualties

30. Ibid.

31. Ruchi Ram Sahni, *Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines*, Amritsar, 1965, p. 225.

32. S. Zimand, quoted in *Quarterly Register*, April, 1924.

33. S.G.P.C., *Truth About Nabha; Struggle for freedom of Religious worship at Jaito*, p. 8.

34. Statement of M/s Mohinder Singh, Harbans Singh and Bhagat Ram Singh, quoted in the *Qly. Reg.* April, 24.

35. Statement of Mr Gulab Singh, quoted in the *Quarterly Register*, April, 1924 p. 104.

36. S.G.P.C., *Struggle for Freedom of Religious Worship at Jaito*, p. 9.

including 70 to 150 dead.<sup>36</sup> The report issued by the Government contradicted the Akali claims and put the number as 19 dead and 28 wounded.<sup>37</sup>

Even though the number of casualties may be less, as claimed by the Government, yet the moral significance of the Jaito firing is far greater than the Nankana massacre, because the perpetrator of this tragedy was not an irresponsible *Mahant* but a civilised Government, headed by an European officer, with high professions about justice and law and order, and being well informed about the objectives and methods of its victims. The sacrifice on the part of the Jatha becomes all the more precious as the suffering Jatha was not caught unawares, as was the case with the Jatha of Bhai Lachhman Singh at Nankana, but from the very start of its march to Jaito, it knew that the supreme sacrifice might be required of it, and knowing this it had voluntarily and cheerfully gone to meet that fate.

The authorities of Nabha tried to justify their action first by issuing some statements in which it was alleged that the firing was first started by the Akali mob and that the mob was armed with *lathis*, *chhavis*, spears and fire arms, and that there was a danger of an attack on the Nabha State by the Akali mob.<sup>38</sup> When there was a strong protest from all quarters against this cruel and barbarious action of the Nabha State authorities and a demand for an independent commission of enquiry, the Government tried to white-wash the action of its officials by appointing a Subordinate Magistrate of Nabha, named Balwant Singh, to enquire into the incident of Jaito firing. In a long report that he submitted to the Government, he states that the Jatha on its march "was visited by a large crowd, which openly declared its intention of using force":<sup>39</sup> Among many charges against the Akalis the one given in the report is that the firing was first started by an 'unknown' Akali and a subject of Nabha State, Imamudin of Dubrikhanan, received a shot under his left thigh.<sup>40</sup> Another bullet, says the Report, "passed through the turban of Hazure Sawan Singh."<sup>41</sup> The report says that as these persons, who received

37. Report of the Enquiry conducted by Mr Balwant Singh, issued by the Govt. of India, on 8th March, 1924. PGRO.

38. File No. 210, PGRO

39. Enquiry Committee Report, *Quarterly Register*, April, 24

40. *Ibid.*

41. *Ibid.*

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the injuries, were behind the firing party, "so it is highly probable for these shots to have come from any other side than the Akalis."<sup>42</sup> At the end the Report tried to justify the Government action saying that "the mob was prepared to achieve its end by all possible means; and were so constituted that a prudent man under the circumstances had no option but to open fire to repel their menacing advance in military formations."<sup>43</sup>

This action of the Government, which was justified by a subordinate Magistrate in the above quoted Report of Enquiry, needs further investigation. Jawahar Lal Nehru who went to Jaito along with K. Santanam and Mr Gidwani, to find out what was happening there and was arrested and kept in Nabha jail, gives an interesting account about the arbitrary nature of justice and executive's domination over the judiciary. "I realise that it is difficult for this court to act independently or to dissociate itself from the executive which has taken the initiative in starting the case against us. Indeed I learnt with some surprise that even applications made by us to the court were being referred to the Administrator of the State for orders...."<sup>44</sup> How could in the present Enquiry an Indian Magistrate, who was a subordinate of the European Administrator of Nabha, go against the will of the executive? How difficult it would have been for him to act independently? He had to justify the action of the Administrator firstly because he was his subordinate and secondly, as was the case with most of the Indian subordinates in those days, he was more enthusiastic and loyal to the British officials than the officials themselves. And the present magistrate, in keeping with the traditions of his class, tried to exonerate the Nabha administration of the brutal charge of playing with the lives of many an innocent people and shifted the responsibility on the Akali shoulders. The arguments given by him are not only baseless and fabricated but are equally unconvincing. A careful study of the strategy and planning<sup>45</sup> made by the Nabha State administration in dealing with the Akalis leaves no doubt about its intentions to punish the Akalis. The passage lead-

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42. *Ibid.*

43. *Ibid.*

44. Statement of Jawahar Lal Nehru, File No. 168 (Nabha Records) PGRO

45. "A Plan of Jaito Massacre" given in the beginning of the *Struggle for Freedom of Religious worship in Jaito*; The Report of Enquiry by S. Balwant Singh also confirms the above arrangements.

ing to the Gurdwara and the fort had been narrowed by a barbed wire barrier on oneside, and a long row of about 200 chained bullock-carts filled with thorny bushes and masses of barbed wire on the other. A number of Pathan policemen from Jhelum and Attock districts, known for their brutal and merciless beatings at Guru-ka-Bagh, were seated on the top of the bullock-carts. Trenches had been dug by the Nabha State Infantry near the Tibbi Sahib Gurdwara under the command of Major Bell Kingsley while the Faridkot Sappers and Miners were standing ready a little beyond the Gurdwara. Col. Minchin had his camp in the middle with two detachments of cavalry. The charges against the Akalis become meaningless in the light of the above arrangements. Yet, for the sake of argument, they can be taken up for discussion. The first charge that "the *Jatha* was armed with *lathis*, *chhavis*, spears and fire arms" is totally wrong in the light of the evidence given by Mr. S. Zimand, who in his letter to Mahatma Gandhi says, "I want therefore to repeat again that I observed carefully the *Jatha* and the crowds following the *Jatha* from February 20th, 7 p.m., till February 21st, 2 p.m. when they entered Nabha territory and that to the best of my knowledge the *Jatha* and the crowd following the *Jatha* *were not armed* and behaved in a peaceful and orderly manner."<sup>46</sup> This evidence is further confirmed by responsible persons like Dr Kitchlew and Principal Gidwani in addition to many an eye-witness. It is possible that some of the crowd might have been carrying *lathis* with them because *lathi* is a handy weapon that every villager generally carries by way of habit and when the *Jatha* marched through their fields, they joined it with whatever they had in their hands. Again it is possible that some of the Akalis were wearing *Kirpans* but this cannot be taken to mean that they were carrying arms. *Kirpans* are still carried by the baptised Sikhs. But these are not to be called fire-arms<sup>47</sup>. The second charge of Akalis having opened fire first is contradicted by the Magistrate himself when he writes, "To the question, who began the firing, I consider that which ever party began the firing does not matter." This shows

46. Mr Zimand's letter to Mahatma Gandhi, quoted in the *Quarterly Register*, April, 1924.

47. The Statement of Dr. Kitchlew given to the Congress Akali Sahayak Bureau, is very relevant in this context : "We had absolutely satisfied ourselves that the *Jatha* and the *Sangat* had no fire-arms or *Chhavis* (except *kirpans*) or any other instruments other than ordinary *lathis*.

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that the firing was not started by the Jatha because as is clear from the testimony of Mr Zimand and others, they had no fire-arms with them. If there were even the slightest possibility of Jatha having opened fire, the Magistrate would not have spared them. The allegation in the Punjab Government communique of the 3rd March, 1924, that shots were fired at eight British officers is interesting that no one was injured as a result of this firing by the Akalis. Again the Government argument that the mob was violent and firing became a necessity is questionable because a bigger mob at Nankana before remained perfectly non-violent. The *jatha* or the crowd would not have done any harm to any one if they were permitted to go their own way without any interference on the part of the authorities. The authorities made a prestige point not to allow the Jatha to fulfil its vow of completing the interrupted *Akhand Path*. Had the Government not given an offensive to the mob by resorting to firing, the things would not have taken such an ugly shape.

Again the Nabha authorities are to be equally blamed first for not having issued any warning before firing and then the firing being in regular volleys and indiscriminate and there being no desultory shots. If the intensions were only to disperse the mob *lathi-charge* could have been resorted to and if at all there was an extreme need for firing, this could have been done in a discriminate manner killing only a few and terrorising others. From all accounts it seems that the firing resorted to by the Nabha state authorities was uncalled for.

Next to the Nankana massacre, the Jaito firing caused the greatest sensation in the country. Public meetings were held at Delhi, Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and Karachi and addressed by popular leaders like Maulana Mohammad Ali and Shoukat Ali, Mr C.R. Dass, Pandit Moti Lal Nehru and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. Mahatma Gandhi and Lala Lajpat Rai expressed their sympathy with the Akali cause. As already mentioned, the Congress showed keen interest and sympathy with the Akalis over the Nabha affair. The matter came up for discussion before the Working Committee of the Congress in the Coconada Session in 1922 and then again at a Special Session held at Delhi in 1923. After listening to some stirring accounts from some Sikh visitors, the Congress leaders evinced their deep sympathy with the Akalis. Principal Gidwani, Mr K. Santanam and Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru visited Jaito to see for them-

selves as to what was happening there. On reaching the Nabha territory they were arrested. Moti Lal Nehru also visited the Nabha territory to meet his son but was not allowed to do so. The Congress, after expressing its dissatisfaction with the official enquiry report set up its own enquiry committee and a report was published by its Secretary.<sup>48</sup>

On the 25th of February Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya moved in the Legislative Assembly the adjournment of the House to discuss the Jaito affair. But the motion was not allowed by the Home Member. Sikh M.L.C.s, Jodh Singh and Narain Singh, made equally unsuccessful attempt to discuss the issue in the Punjab Legislative Council.<sup>49</sup> Akali agitation at Jaito also received the support of the Central Sikh League and other Sikh organisations.<sup>50</sup> Attempts of the nationalist and the Sikh leaders having failed to bring about any amicable settlement, the SGPC continued its mission of sending more *Shahidi Jathas*. To avoid the repetition of the miseries that befell the first *Shahidi Jatha* and to give the Government time to think over the problem and come to settlement, some of the nationalist leaders, particularly Mahatma Gandhi, advised the SGPC to stop sending more Jathas to Jaito. In his letter dated 28th of February, 1924, to the Secretary of the S.G.P.C., Mahatma Gandhi writes, "But I would ask the Akali Sikhs not to send any more *Jathas* without further deliberations and consultation with those leaders outside the Sikh community who have hitherto been giving their advice."<sup>51</sup> The Mahatma further exhorted the Akalis, "It would be well to stop and watch the developments arising out of the tragedy..."<sup>52</sup> Lala Lajpat Rai, who was about this time with Mahatma Gandhi, also addressed a letter to the S.G.P.C. asking them to postpone sending further *Jathas* to Jaito so that national leaders

48. The Report concludes "(1) That the Jatha remained perfectly non-violent to the end (2) that the crowd was unarmed except for the lathis and was never aggressive it certainly had no fire-arms (3) There was no justification whatever for the action of the Administrator and the fire even if it had been opened only as a precautionary measure, was carried on for an unnecessary length of time."

49. Punjab Legislative Council Proceedings, Feb., 1924.

50. The C.S.L. passed a Resolution in a meeting held at Lahore on 4th April, 1924 expressing "its sentiments of contempt that the Govt. had not so far moved forward to undo the injustice done to a venerable prince." *Akali* dated 7th April, 1926.

51- Mahatma Gandhi's open letter to the SGPC, dated 28th February, 1924, quoted in the *Quarterly Register*, April, 1924, p. 112.

52. *Ibid.*, p. 113.

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might have time to consider the whole matter and then advise the Akalis as to their future course. The SGPC, while thanking the Mahatma for his sympathy with the movement and assuring him that perfect non-violence was the sheet anchor of the Akali hopes, expressed its inability to stop sending of more *Jathas* to Jaito till the object of completing the *Path* was achieved. It was under these circumstances that more *Jathas* were despatched.

Realising that in taking up the Nabha question the SGPC was drifting into politics, more and more national and Sikh leaders started advising the Akalis to give up the agitation over the restoration of the Maharaja of Nabha. The SGPC assumed a luke warm attitude, neither dropping it altogether nor making it a life and death question any longer. A section of the knowledgeable Sikhs were already feeling that in taking up the Nabha issue, which was a political question, the S.G.P.C. had no *locus-standi* and was backing a wrong horse. The Maharaja of Nabha also after realising that the Akalis were unable to get back the throne to him started condemning them of betrayal and in a letter dated 31st of July dissociated himself from the Akalis saying, "I am not responsible for the present agitation about Nabha affairs and have no sympathy with it."<sup>53</sup> The prolonged agitation and another front having been opened at Bhai Pheru, were putting great strain on the resources of the SGPC in men and money. Most of the leaders having been sent behind the bars, the movement had quite weakened outside and it was becoming increasingly difficult to get volunteers to continue the agitation. The increasing influence of the extremists and the growing popularity of the Babar Akalis in the rural areas compelled the SGPC leaders to come to an understanding with the Government and to get whatever they could lest the situation got out of control. The Government also, on the other hand, became tired of the long struggle and was in a reconciliatory mood. It was under these circumstances that national leaders like Pandit Malaviya made serious efforts for a compromise. While the Nabha Administrator was willing to allow the Akalis to fulfil their vow of 101 *Akhand Paths*, he expressed his fears that a long period of ten months that was needed to complete them was too much and the

53. *Some Confidential Papers of the Akali Movement*, (ed. Ganda Singh. SGPC, Amritsar, 1965) p, 74. From the report of the Political Agent to the Viceroy it appears that this statement was forcibly obtained by the Agent from the Maharaja. *Nabha Affairs*, N.A.I. Foreign Pol.



duty he owed to the subjects of the state made it "impossible for him to allow an invasion of the state territory by outside people for a period of ten months."<sup>54</sup> The negotiations lingered only over the duration. The Administrator of Nabha said the only basis on which the negotiations could be carried on was a precedent guarantee from the SGPC that the *Akhand Paths* would be finished in a very short period, say seven days. Mr Johnston, the Administrator, proposed for this purpose the holding of 101 or atleast 50 *paths* simultaneously. As a result of the discussion, he was willing to admit the Jatha into the Gurdwara but only on the condition that Pandit Malaviya would give the required guarantee on behalf of the Akalis. This the Pandit could not do on his own. He emphasised that the possible basis for the solution could be the unconditional admission of the *Jatha* into the Gurdwara, since the Akalis were pledged to restart the *Akhand Path* and then to carry on the negotiations with the SGPC. However, the main objection of the administrator was the time. As these unsuccessful parleys were going on, it was on the 9th of July, 1925 that the Sikh Gurdwaras Act was passed in the Punjab Legislative Council.<sup>55</sup> As a result of the above legislation most of the Akalis arrested in connection with Jaito and other *morchas* were set at liberty, On the 27th of July, 1925, many Jathas reached Jaito after being released

54. File No. 195 (Chief Minister, Nabha) PGRO.

55. The Lt. Governor of the Punjab made the following declaration with a view to solving the Nabha issue :

"...The Administrator of Nabha will permit bands of pilgrims to proceed for religious worship to the Gangsar Gurdwara under the following rules :

- (a) That they abstain from holding political *Diwans* or spreading political propaganda during their sojourn within the state boundaries;
- (b) that they confine themselves to the use of the Gurdwara itself and such reasonable space around it as may be set apart for their accommodation.
- (c) that they will be self-supporting during their visit, the village and Mandi of Jaito being excluded from the area set apart for their accommodation;
- (d) that any such band will arrive at Jaito by rail or by a road decided upon by the Administrator and that suitable arrangements shall have been made to ensure that any such band of pilgrims will be unaccompanied by any *Sangat* or following ;
- (e) and that the date of arrival of any such band at Jaito is communicated to the Administrator in order to enable him to make suitable arrangements in connection with the same..."

Extract from the speech of Lt. Governor delivered in the Punjab Legislative Council on July 9, 1925, at Simla.

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from the Nabha *Beers* and other Jails. The deadlock finally ended with the Akalis completing their 101 *Akhand Paths* on the 6th of August, 1925.

While the passage of the Gurdwara Act helped settle the question of disrupted *Akhand Path*, the main question—restoration of Maharaja Ripudaman Singh of Nabha to his throne—for which the agitation was started, was by now, almost forgotten or given up. It was this stand of the Akalis that brought them greatest of criticism by a section of the Sikhs. As already discussed, from the very beginning some of the knowledgeable members of the SGPC and the Sikh M.L.C.s felt that for whatever reasons the Maharaja was deposed, it was, technically speaking, a political issue and the SGPC or the Akali Dal, which were formed to look after the affairs of the Sikh Gurdwaras, were, therefore, not competent to take up the question of his restoration. In an urgent letter from inside the Lahore Fort, the Akali leaders confessed that the movement was becoming weaker day by day and they were unable to get any support from the masses because they could not establish that the restoration of the Maharaja of Nabha was a religious issue. When they were asked by the national leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Malaviya how was the “abdication of Maharaja Ripudaman Singh a religious issue?”, the Akali leaders wrote, “they were unable to satisfy them.” Sardar Amar Singh Jhabbal resigned the membership of the SGPC saying that “in taking up the Nabha question the Committee had made a very serious mistake.” Another Akali leader, Master Sunder Singh Lyallpuri, suggested that this question should be handed over to the political organisation of the Sikhs, the Central Sikh League, and if it was not done, he threatened, he would launch a campaign against it.<sup>56</sup> Even Mahatma Gandhi advised the Akalis that the performance of the disrupted *Akhand Path*, which was a purely religious question, should be separated from the question of the restoration of the Maharaja of Nabha, which was political in nature. “The agitation which the Akalis want to carry on in connection with the restoration will be on an independent footing and will be purely separate movement.”<sup>57</sup>

There were serious differences of opinion among the SGPC members inside the Lahore Fort Jail about the Nabha affair. Out of 37 members there were only six who wanted nothing less than the resto-

56. *Some Confidential Papers of the Akali Movement*, pp. 237-38.

57. *Ibid.*, p. 53.

ration of the Maharaja as the basis for settlement with the Government. An equal number of members wanted to drop the Nabha question altogether. About a dozen other members wanted to keep the agitation alive as a matter of expediency simply because they felt that its suspension or stoppage would weaken the agitation and would be interpreted as a moral defeat of the Akalis. These members were willing to give up the question as soon as the remaining issues were settled with the Government. All the members of the SGPC inside the jail felt that they should be able to mould their attitude towards the Nabha issue in accordance with the changed circumstances. Even an extremist leader like Master Tara Singh supported this stand. It was this Nabha question which caused the first major split among the Akali leaders because after the passage of the Act most of the Akalis came out of the jails as they felt they had got in the form of the Gurdwara Act all that they were agitating for. Others thought giving up the Nabha question was a betrayal and remained behind the bars.<sup>58</sup>

The long agitation did not help the Maharaja either. On the other hand it stiffened the attitude of the government towards him. Thinking that Dehra Dun was too near to keep him away from the Akali politics, the British authorities removed him to far off Kodai-kanal in the south. After being unable to get back his throne with the help of his Akali supporters the Maharaja, instead of thanking them for all that they had done, started condemning them and charged them for having betrayed his cause. In a long note the Maharaja charged the Akali leaders that they had been treacherous and unfaithful to his cause like his earlier advisers who had been responsible for his abdication. He said when S. Teja Singh Samundri, Bawa Harkishan Singh and Master Tara Singh came to him he was not willing to let them take up his cause but these leaders, alleged the Maharaja, with raised hands and in a defiant and challenging loud voice said "Either you will be restored to your throne or the whole Sikh nation will die for your cause but will not give up the issue."<sup>59</sup> In the note the Maharaja further holds the akalis responsible for his helplessness to fight the case on his own as all the documents were taken away from him by his Akali supporters. The Maharaja did not want the Akalis to accept the Gurdwara Act because he felt in securing the measure

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58. For further details see *Confidential Papers of the Akali Movement*, pp. 244-45.

59. *Confidential Papers*, pp. 172-74.

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the Akalis will have, of necessity, to give up the question of his restoration and he would be deprived of what little was left with him. In the end the Maharaja wanted to know as to why the Akalis were dropping the question of his restoration and stated that it was under similar helplessness that he had signed the abdication letter under which the Akalis were being forced to give up his cause<sup>60</sup>.

True, the Akalis can be held guilty of having first raised to the sky the hopes of the Maharaja for restoration and then causing him disillusionment and disappointment by giving up his question as a matter of expediency. But for this action of the Akalis the Maharaja himself is to be blamed more than the Akalis. All along the Maharaja was not firm on his stand. Impressed with the Akali victories against the Government at Guru-ka-Bagh and in the 'Keys Affair', the Maharaja over-estimated the potentials of his Akali supporters and, through some of his agents, prompted them to take up his cause. But during the course of the struggle when he realised that the Akali agitation, instead of getting him his throne, was worsening his claims, he shifted his stand and dissociated himself with the Akalis openly. His indecisive nature and fickle-mindedness was mainly responsible for his sufferings. He quietly encouraged the Akalis to take up his cause but at the same time did not want to offend the British officials. If he wanted the Akalis to take up the question in the right earnest, he should have been bold enough to come out openly against the Government. When the SGPC representatives, K. M. Panikkar, Sardar Arjan Singh and Sardar Raja Singh reached the Maharaja's residence at Dehra Dun he hid himself in the bathroom. It was with great difficulty that they managed an interview with the Maharaja. When they asked him for a written statement, the Maharaja tried to put them off with one excuse or the other. When they pressed for it the Maharaja first complained of having been badly treated by the Akalis and then said, "Then why not leave the Nabha Question."<sup>61</sup> The Maharaja further issued a statement on the 31st of August, 1923, saying, "I am not responsible for the present agitation about Nabha affairs and have no sympathy with it."<sup>62</sup> The Maharaja had thus, in the words of Mahatma Gandhi, "made it practically impossible for his well-wishers to carry on an effective agitation for his restoration"<sup>63</sup>

60. *Ibid.*

61. *Confidential Papers*, pp. 113-14.

62. *Ibid.*, p. 53.

63. Mahatma Gandhi's letter dated 4th March, 1924, to the SGPC, quoted in the *Confidential Papers*, p. 55.

The Mahatma felt that in case the Maharaja still could issue a public statement saying, "that all the writings were practically exhorting him and that he is quite willing and anxious that all the facts against him should be published and if he is prepared to face all the consequences of the agitation, viz., deprivation of titles, annuity & c., if all his allegations regarding duress can be proved, it is possible to carry on an effective and even successful agitation."<sup>64</sup> But the Maharaja was too timid to come out in open with such a statement. Had he made a declaration of this kind, his question could have been taken up even by the National leaders and a much more effective agitation on all-India level could have been launched for his restoration.

With regard to their stand on the Nabha issue the British officials and the Administrator of Nabha had no ground. A large number of daily reports from the *Khangi Karobari* (Minister in-charge of Household Affairs) of Nabha stationed at Jaito, as also the reports of the Nazim of Phool who had all along been a witness to these happenings at Jaito, fully expose the Government stand. Conscious of its moral defeat and loss of prestige at Guru-ka-Bagh and in the Keys-Affair, the British Government was anxious to forestall any Akali designs of winning one more popular battle against the authorities. A high government official, the Nazim of Phool, admitted that the Jaito agitation was nothing more than a point of prestige between the Government and the Akalis. The Akalis were prepared to leave Jaito as soon as the place was cleared of the military and the police. The above official carefully records in his weekly report submitted to the Administrator of Nabha, "Now it is a matter of prestige; If the police leaves the station before, Akalis will think themselves successful. If the Akalis leave the station prior to the police they will be ashamed of their obstinacy and will not dare return."<sup>65</sup>

It was this war of prestige which the government came forward to win thinking that the suppression of the Akalis will restore its lost prestige in the eyes of the people. While going through the proceedings of the daily *Diwans* at Jaito and the speeches that were delivered *vis-a-vis* the daily and weekly reports of the government officials, one finds at least some justification in the Akali claims that the Government policy with regard to Nabha affair was a side-attack to suppress

64. *Ibid.*

65. Weekly Report dated 1st Sept. 1923, from the Nazim of Phool to the Administrator of Nabha, File No. 70, (Chief Minister, Nabha) PGRO.

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the Akali movement. In the Report of Enquiry published by the Government as well as the Judgement in the Jaito Firing Case, the Akalis are accused of having delivered 'Political Speeches' and making this as excuse, the Government went ahead with declaring the SGPC and the Akali Dal as "unlawful associations," banning the entry into Nabha of the Akalis or any other national or Sikh leaders, nay even the press reporters and representatives. But the perusal of the proceedings of the Diwan at Jaito<sup>66</sup> reveals that the Akalis who were conducting the Diwan were least politically conscious and could say nothing more than expressing their sympathy with the deposed Maharaja. On the 1st of September, 1923, the Nazim of Phool reported to the Nabha Administrator, "Since last three days they (the Akalis) are delivering no political speeches at all."<sup>67</sup> Even if, for argument's sake, we accept that the Akalis were not allowed to hold the Diwan because they wanted to express sympathies with the Maharaja, which according to the government was a political question, one wonders why similar Diwans organised by the opponents of the Maharaja were not only not disturbed but were fully encouraged and patronised by the Government. If discussing the virtues of the Maharaja could be termed as political, how could his evils and condemnation by his opponents be seen as free from politics.

While the Akali obstinacy dragged them into the struggle, Government obstinacy prolonged it to a period of over four years, thus causing a great strain on its resources and giving one more blow to its prestige. Had the Government acted wisely and understood the Akali character rightly, the trouble could have been easily averted. The Akalis would have left Jaito after completing the *Akhând Path* had not the government offered them a challenge by disrupting it and arresting them en masse. A native official, the Nazim of Phool, could read the Akali character better than an alien Administrator. He rightly warned the Government, "The more they (Akalis) are suppressed the more they will be helped by the Panth," and the Government not paying any heed to his advice wanted to score a victory for the achievement of which it broke its previous record of suppression. It was this obstinacy of the Government which involved the Nabha state in a long drawn struggle for well over four years.

66. Quoted on page 373.

67. Weekly Report dated 1st Sept. 1923, from the Nazim of Phool to the Administrator of Nabha, File No. 70, (Chief Minister, Nabha) PGRO.

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## Genesis of the Partition of the Punjab — 1947\*

DR KIRPAL SINGH

The partition of the Punjab is in a way a part of partition of India. There were several factors—political, socio-religious, economic, etc., which led to the establishment of Pakistan. The scope of this paper is to analyse the Punjab communal tangle and other local factors and circumstances culminating in the partition of the Punjab which was ultimately adopted in 1947.

The right of representation granted to the Muslims in 1900 and extended to other communities in 1919 gave rise to communal consciousness. The Muslims, who constituted about 55 per cent of the population of the Punjab according to the Census Report of 1921 and 57 per cent according to the Census Report of 1941 had apparently a very narrow majority over the Sikhs and the Hindus. That made the communal problem acute between the Muslims and non-Muslims. Sir Malcolm Darling wrote, "Nowhere is communal feeling potentially so dangerous and so complicated as in the Punjab—it is dangerous because of the Punjab's virile hot headed people and complicated because there is a third and not less obstinate party—the Sikhs who were more closely knit together than either Hindus or the Muslims, fiercer too and prouder and more dynamic—they never forget that it was from them we conquered the Punjab."<sup>1</sup> The Moti Lal Nehru Report rightly recognised the magnitude of the communal problem in the Punjab when it recorded in 1928, "a very potent factor to be taken into account is the presence of the strong Hindu minority side by side with the Muslim majority and Sikh minority. The Punjab problem has assumed an all-India importance and we cannot look at it as an isolated case arising in a single province."<sup>2</sup>

### **Separate Representation for Muslims**

In the Punjab the Muslims were in a majority. It was the only province where the majority community had been granted the right

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\*Read at a meeting of the History Society, Patiala.

1. Sir Malcolm Darling, *At Freedom's Door*, London, 1949, page XII.

2. Motilal Nehru Report, *All Parties Conference Allahbad*, 1928, page 57.



of separate representation, The Report of the Franchise Committee, Indian Constitutional Reforms, 1919 stated, "... special electorates for the Mohammedans could be admitted only in provinces where they were in minority of votes. As regards the Punjab, our calculation goes to show that Mohammedan voters are in a slight majority over the combined strength of the Hindu and Sikh voters. The margin is not great and it is even possible that actual enumeration might convert it into a minority. As the Sikhs' claim to separate representation has been conceded it is clearly consideration of expediency rather than logic that would place the large majority of residuary voters in separate constituencies."<sup>3</sup>

The main consideration for this special and extraordinary treatment of the majority community in the Punjab were their narrow majority and their economic backwardness. The Hindus and the Sikhs dominated in the fields of industry, commerce, trade and banking. In the provincial capital of Lahore, the non-Muslims owned 108 registered factories out of 186. They paid eight times as much sales tax as Muslim traders and owned more than 75 per cent of commerce and trade. Banks, commercial institutions, insurance companies and industrial concerns were mostly in their hands. The urban property tax, income tax and other taxes paid by the non-Muslims were far in excess of those paid by the Muslims.<sup>4</sup> Even in the Muslim majority districts trade and industry were in the hands of the Hindus and the Sikhs who lived in the towns and cities. In the West Punjab districts of Rawalpindi, Jhelum, Sialkot, Gujarat, Gujranwala, Shahpur, Layallpur, Mianwali, Multan, Muzaffargarh, Montgomery and Jhang more than 5% of the population was engaged in trade.<sup>5</sup> In the rest of the province where the Hindus and the Sikhs were more numerous than the Muslims the trade enterprise of the Hindus was of less value. The non-Muslims owned more than half of the total number of industrial establishment in the whole of the Punjab.<sup>6</sup> In the central districts the Sikhs were the biggest land owners. In the Lahore Division the Sikhs paid as much as 46 per cent of the total land revenue.<sup>7</sup> The

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3. *Report of Franchise Committee, Indian Constitutional Reforms*, Calcutta, 1919, page 317

4. *Partition Proceeding, Govt. of India*, Vol. VI, page 186.

5. *Census of India 1921, Vol. XV, Part I*, page 358.

6. *Idem*.

7. *Sikh Memorandum to the Punjab Boundary Commission*, page 27.

Jat Sikhs from the Central Districts of the Punjab were mainly responsible for developing the colony areas of Lyallpur and Montgomery.

Next to agriculture, money-lending was the most important commercial activity in the province. Money-lending was entirely in the hands of the Hindus and the Sikhs as usury was taboo among the Muslims. According to Sir Malcolm Darling the total agricultural debt of the Punjab was about nineteen times the land revenue and the Punjab agriculturist was more indebted than any other agriculturist in India and more than half of the debt was incurred by the Muslim rural population.<sup>8</sup> The Muslim peasants of the West Punjab were as a body heavily indebted to the Hindu and Sikh money-lenders of the Multan and Rawalpindi Divisions. When most of the Hindus left Multan on account of severe plague epidemic in the Multan Division in September 1922, the Muslim peasants who were in debt looted their grains and burnt their account books which recorded their debts. The trouble spread to such an extent that the military had to be requisitioned from Multan to restore order.<sup>9</sup>

This economic domination of the non-Muslims over the Muslims lent a force to the Muslim contention that they were in danger of economic exploitation by the Hindus and the Sikhs. It was on this ground that the Punjab Committee constituted in 1928 by the Punjab Legislative Council to confer with the Indian Statutory Commission, recommended that "the interests of an economically and educationally backward community cannot be safeguarded unless it is allowed a free choice in the selection of its representatives. If common electorates are introduced, the money-lenders and financially stronger community will be able to influence the voters of the backward and poor communities and get their own nominees elected which will practically mean the backward communities being left unrepresented in the Legislature."<sup>10</sup>

#### **Muslim Domination Opposed**

The Sikhs and the Hindus opposed the communal representation and reservation of seats which had been granted by the Communal

8. Sir Malcolm Darling, *Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt*, page 154.

9. *The Punjab Administrative Report, 1922-23*, page 3.

Hugh Kennedy Trevaskis, *Punjab To-day*, Vol. I, page 30.

10. Report of the Punjab Committee, constituted to confer with the Indian Statutory Commission.

*Report of Indian Statutory Commission*, Vol. III, page 455.

Award to the Muslims because it gave them a statutory majority of 51 per cent in the legislature. The Hindus who were about 30 per cent argued that there should not be any reservation of seats for the majority community, a minority should not be given less representation in terms of their population, and weightage should not be given to one minority at the expense of another minority. The Sikhs who were about 13 per cent paid about 40 per cent of land revenue and water rates combined<sup>11</sup> and supplied a gallant and valuable element in the Indian Army demanded that they must have substantial weightage as enjoyed by the Muslims in the provinces where they were in a minority. Secondly, the Muslim representation must be less than 50 per cent so that no one community should be able to rule over the other. The Sikh delegation to the Round Table Conference, London, raised this issue and argued that "In the Punjab, they (Muslims) claim to have their majority ensured by statute ... The Muslims' demand for this majority is made a basis of separate electorates which means that the other two communities could not influence the permanent majority chosen as it would be by constituents swayed by none but communal motives and aims."<sup>12</sup>

Significantly enough the claim put forward by every community had its own justification, but it could not be met without injustice to another community. In case the Sikhs were granted sufficient weightage, the Muslims would be deprived of their narrow majority in the Legislature. If weightage to the Sikhs was granted out of the portion to the Hindus it would have resulted in injustice to the latter. If no weightage was given to the Sikhs it would be an injustice to them as similar privileges were enjoyed by the Muslims in other provinces. In this way the communities in the Punjab were so distributed that their individual claims were mutually antagonistic and the solution of the problem seemed impossible. The Nehru Report rightly stated: "It is this circumstance in the Punjab which, apart from general consideration has so far defied all attempts at a satisfactory adjustment."<sup>13</sup> The soil was ready for the seeds of partition.

#### **Proposals for Partitions of the Punjab**

One of the basic factors which nourished the idea of the partition

11. S. Ujjal Singh and S. Sampuran Singh's Memorandum, *Indian Round Table Conference, Vol. III*, Appendix N, page 1400.

12. *Ibid.*, page 1400.

13. Moti Lal Nehru Report, All Parties Conference 1928, page 57.

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of the Punjab was the fact that the Muslims were predominant in the western Punjab and the non-Muslims in the eastern. In the extreme westernmost district of Attock the Muslims formed 91 per cent of the population and were 88 per cent in the districts of Jhelum and Dera Ghazi Khan. In the remaining districts, from west to east, their population decreased. In the central districts of the Punjab their relative strength varied from 40 to 80 per cent. They formed only 1 per cent of population of Kangra and the hill states. The Hindus were predominant in the hilly territories where they were about 94 per cent of the population. They formed a fairly large majority in the southern districts. In the Rohtak district the Hindus were 82 per cent. In the central districts of the Punjab and in the Princely States their population varied from 10 to 49 per cent. The Sikhs were mostly concentrated in the central Punjab. The four main centres of the Sikh population were Ludhiana and Amritsar in British India, Faridkot and Patiala among the Punjab States. The highest percentage of the Sikhs population 44.5 per cent was in Faridkot state.<sup>14</sup>

As a result of the growing communal consciousness there were a number of communal riots at various places in India during 1923 and 1924. One of the most appalling was a Hindu-Muslim riot at Kohat in the North-West Frontier Province. On September 10, 1924, a Muslim mob from the surrounding villages resorted to all forms of brutality against the Hindu population. Such was the ferocity of the rioting that the police and military felt helpless to protect the non-Muslims who were evacuated in toto to Rawalpindi. This communal outburst gave a rude shock to the politicians of India and set them thinking about the gravity of the communal problem. According to Lala Lajpat Rai, the Kohat tragedy was a unique incident of its own kind.<sup>15</sup> He, therefore, wrote a series of articles on the communal riots and in conclusion he suggested some remedial measures. One of these was the division of the Punjab into East Punjab and West Punjab because the eastern part of the Punjab was predominately non-Muslim and the Western predominately Muslim. He argued that if democracy was to work successfully and effectively under the system of communal electorates, the partition of the Punjab was

14. Census of India 1921, Vol. XV, part I, page 258.

15. *Indian Annual Register* 1924, Vol. II, pages 26 and 422.

essential.<sup>16</sup> Lala Lajpat Rai was perfectly correct in his estimate. But he did not mean any sovereign state for the Muslim, as it has been conceded in the case of Pakistan. Subsequently Chowdhury Rahmat Ali wrote, "the Lala's proposal was a decisive step in the right direction."<sup>17</sup>

In order to solve the communal tangle in the Punjab, Sir Geoffrey Corbett who had served in the Punjab as Financial Commissioner and was Secretary of the Indian Delegation to the Round Table Conference, London, suggested another scheme. He advocated the separation of Ambala Division from the Punjab to make one community predominant. He argued, "Historically Ambala Division is a part of Hindustan and its inclusion in the province of the Punjab was an incident of British rule. Its language is Hindustani, not Punjabi, and its people are akin to the people of adjoining Meerath and Agra Divisions. Ambala Division is not irrigated from the five rivers but from the Jumna system on which the adjoining districts of United Provinces (of Agra and Oudh) also depend. It is, therefore, fair to assume that in any rational scheme for the redistribution of provinces Ambala Division less Simla district and the north west corner of the Ambala district would be separated from the Punjab."<sup>18</sup>

The scheme sponsored by Sir Geoffrey greatly attracted public attention. Mahatma Gandhi during the Round Table Conference had this scheme circulated to all members. The proposed exclusions of Ambala Division meant the exclusion of 3,099,000 Hindus, 240,296 Sikhs and 1,418,136 Muslims<sup>19</sup> which would have raised the Muslim majority to about 63 per cent. This would have solved the communal problem in Punjab by making one community predominant over the others. But this line of argument did not find favour with the Punjab Committee appointed to confer with the Statutory Commission because if Ambala Division were to be taken away from the Punjab, it would

16. Lala Lajpat Rai, The Communal Problem, *The Tribune*, Lahore, dated 21st Dec., 1924.

17. *Pakistan—The Fatherland of Pak Nations*, 3rd Edition, 1946, page 217 Chowdhury Rahmat Ali's references in this book at pages 217, 218 and 223 indicate that Lala Lajpat Rai had first suggested partition of India which appears to be wrong as nowhere else we find Lajpat Rai referring to the partition of Punjab or India.

18. Sir Geoffrey Corbett, The Communal problem in the Punjab, *Indian Round Table Conference*, Vol., III, Appendix No. VX, p. 1431.

19. *Census of India 1941*, Vol. Punjab, Pages 43-44.

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reduce Hindus to a smaller minority and upset the balance between the various communities. The Committee, therefore, recommended that "any large disparity between the communities in the present circumstances is undesirable in the interest of the province and good government. As the communities are at present balanced there is not even a remote chance for any one community to form a Cabinet on communal lines."<sup>20</sup>

In order to contract Sir Geoffery Corbett's scheme the Sikhs delegates to the Round Table Conference made another proposal for the division of the Punjab. They stated in their memorandum: "If the Muslims refuse to accept in this province, where they are in a slight majority in population anything but their present demand of reserved majority, we ask for a territorial rearrangement which would take from the Punjab the Rawalpindi and Multan Divisions (excluding Montgomery and Lyallpur districts). These Divisions are overwhelmingly Muslim as well as racially akin to the North West Frontier Province. These overwhelmingly Muslim districts with a population of seven millions can either form a separate province or be amalgamated with the North West Frontier Province."<sup>21</sup> The exclusion of Rawalpindi and Multan Divisions would have raised the Hindus and Sikhs to a majority in the remaining portion of the Punjab. It may be noted that this demand was partially satisfied by the partition of the Punjab in 1947.

It is not of little significance that the various schemes sponsored by Muslim intellectuals aimed at the disintegration of the Punjab in one way or the other. Sir Mohammad Iqbal, the great Muslim poet and statesman of the Punjab who is considered to be the father of the idea of a "single state for the Muslims after amalgamation of the Punjab, North West Frontier Province and Sindh", clearly foresaw that in his political arrangement, Ambala Division and some other districts would have to be separated from the Punjab. He stated in his famous address delivered at the Muslim Conference in 1929 that "The exclusion of Ambala Division and perhaps some districts where non-Muslims predominate will make it (the Muslim state) less extensive and more Muslim in population."<sup>22</sup> Nawab Sir Mohammad Shah

20. The Report of the Punjab Committee, *Indian Statutory Commission*, Vol. III, Page 410-11.

21. Memorandum of S. Ujjal Singh & S. Sampuran Singh, *Indian Round Table Conference*, Government of India publication, 1932, Vol. III, page 1400.

22. *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal*, compiled by Shamloo, Lahore, 1944, page 13.

Niwaz Khan advocated splitting the Punjab into two zones. According to him the "Eastern Hindu tracts comprising Ambala Division and Kangra District were to join Hindu India federation whereas the rest of the Punjab was to join Indus Region Federation."<sup>23</sup> Dr Syed Abdul Latif of the Usmania University, while discussing the position of the Hindus and the Sikhs of the Punjab in his "Cultural Zones Scheme", wrote: "A similar zone will have to be provided to the Hindus and the Sikhs of the Muslim block in the North West...a zone may be formed of all non-Muslim States at present under the Punjab States Agency to be occupied entirely by the Hindus and the Sikhs. The Hindu State of Kashmir will be included in this Hindus Sikh zone. The districts occupied by Muslims may by mutual agreement be transferred to the Punjab proper and in return the North East of the present Punjab comprising Kangra valley be added to the jurisdiction of the Maharaja"<sup>24</sup> (of Jammu Kashmir).

The climax came in the Lahore resolution the Muslim League (1940) which is synonymous with the Pakistani resolution. It clearly stated that the Muslim State (Pakistan) was to consist of "geographically contiguous units, demarcated into regions with such a territorial readjustment as may be necessary." According to Professor R. Coupland, the words "territorial readjustment" were particularly mentioned for the splitting of the Punjab and to exclude Ambala Division because the whole of the Punjab could not be included in Pakistan as there were areas where Muslims were not in a majority nor was there any geographical contiguity with Muslim majority areas. This point has been made more clear from the letter of Dr Syed Abdul Latif, member of the Muslim League Constitution Committee formed to work out the details of the Pakistan scheme. He wrote to Sir Abdullah Haroon, Chairman of the Committee: "The Lahore Resolution aims at homogeneous compact blocks or states with an overwhelming Muslim majority. But the Punjab and Aligarh members of your Committee, through their imperialistic designs over essentially non-Muslim areas, would like to have larger Punjab extending even to Aligarh covering all non-Muslim States from Kashmir

23. Nawab Sir Muhammad Shah Niwas Khan, *A Punjabi, Confederacy of India, Lahore, 1939*, page 243.

24. Dr. Rajendra Prasad, *India Divided*, 3rd edition, Bombay, 1947, page 189.

25. Prof. R. Coupland, *The Future of India, Report on the Constitutional Problem in India, 1944*, Vol. II, page 8.

to Jaisalmer which reduces the Muslim percentages to 55%. This zone cannot be called a Muslim zone as it contains 45 per cent non-Muslims in it."<sup>26</sup>

### **The Demand for the Partition of the Punjab**

Sir Sunder Singh Majithia, founder of the Chief Khalsa Dewan, Amritsar, a Minister in the Unionist Government and a veteran Sikh leader (died in 1941), was the first Sikh to realise that ultimately Pakistan would mean for the Sikhs a parting of the ways with the Muslims. The Khalsa National Party, of which he was the leader, passed a resolution a week after the Muslim League's Pakistan resolution prophesying that "the Muslim League has created a situation which may mean a parting of the ways for the Sikhs and the Muslims with whom the Khalsa National Party has been co-operating in the provincial autonomy regime in the best interests of the Province and the Sikhs community... It would be the height of audacity for any one to imagine that the Sikhs would tolerate for a single day the undiluted communal Raj of any community in the Punjab which is not only their homeland but also their holy land."<sup>27</sup>

The Draft Declaration issued by Sir Stafford Cripps in 1942 gave an impetus to the demand for the partition of the Punjab as one of its main features was to give a right to the provinces to secede from the Centre, and "with such non-acceding provinces should they so desire, His Majesty's Government would be prepared to agree upon a new constitution giving the same full status as the Indian Union."<sup>28</sup> According to Brecher the Draft Declaration implied acceptance of Pakistan demand" by the British.<sup>29</sup> "This clearly envisaged Pakistan and afforded us a clear chance to get full Pakistan of our conception without danger of a claim for partition of the Provinces of Punjab and Bengal,"<sup>30</sup> subsequently wrote Choudhary Khaliqzaman a prominent member of the Muslim League working Committee. Sir Stafford Cripps wrote to Mr. Jinnah that any province which should secure 60 per cent votes in the Assembly for accession to India would

26. Dr. Syed Abdul Latif's letter dated 8th March, 1941, *Pakistan Issue Nawab Nazar Jang Bahadur, Lahore*, 1945, page 98.
27. *Indian Annual Register 1940*, page 357.
28. *S.D.I.C. (Speeches and Documents on Indian Constitution by Maurice Gwyer and A. Appalarai)* Vol. II, page 520.
29. Brecher, *Nehru, A Political Biography*, London, 1959, page 278
30. Choudhary Khaliqzaman, *Pathways to Pakistan*, Orient Longmans, Pakistan, page 277.



have the right to do so. In case of its failure to secure the required percentage a party could claim a plebiscite of the whole population of the province.<sup>31</sup> It meant that the Sikhs and the Hindus of the Punjab could never secure 60 per cent of votes for accession of the Punjab to the Indian Union as the population of non-Muslims in the Punjab was about 44 per cent. The Draft Declaration greatly alarmed the Sikhs in the Punjab because it meant that Punjab, being a Muslim majority province, could secede from the Centre and could acquire the same status as the Indian Union. In that case the Sikhs and the Hindus were to be under perpetual Muslim domination. In a memorandum to Sir Stafford Cripps the Sikhs, therefore, lodged a vigorous protest by stating that "their position in the Punjab has been finally liquidated."<sup>32</sup> They demanded : "why should not the population of any area opposed to separation (from the Centre) be given the right to record its verdict and to form an autonomous unit."<sup>33</sup> It was argued in the memorandum, that "the Sikhs cannot attain their rightful position or can effectively protect their interests unless the Punjab is redistributed into two provinces with the River Ravi as forming the boundary between them." It was asserted that "By delimiting the present provincial boundaries of the Punjab, a new province comprising Ambala and Jullundur Divisions with three districts of Amritsar, Gurdaspur and Lahore to be constituted."<sup>34</sup> Significantly enough this demand for the demarcation of the boundary with the districts of Amritsar, Gurdaspur and Lahore was partially satisfied by the Redcliffe Award. Again Master Tara Singh, the Akali leader, stressed the idea of the partition of the Punjab in his letter to Sir Stafford Cripps dated 1st May, 1942. He said, "I thought I had convinced you at Delhi that you could give Sikhs substantial protection by dividing the present Punjab into two parts and giving right of non-accession to each part. The Sikhs and the Hindus do not want to go out of India. Why should the non-Muslim majority of the central and eastern Punjab be forced to secede from India against their wishes ?...If you can separate provinces from India for the domination of the Muslims how can you refuse to separate a big area

31. *Ibid.*, page 277.

32. Memorandum handed over to Sir Stafford Cripps by the Shiromani Akali Dal on March 31, 1942.

33. *Ibid.*

34. *Ibid.*

for the protection of the Sikhs from the rule of a single community"<sup>35</sup> In his press statement published on December 2, 1942, Master Tara Singh advocated the partition of the Punjab into two provinces, one predominated by the Hindus and the Sikhs and the other by the Muslims. He quoted the examples of Orissa, Bihar and Sindh which had been made separate units without in any way destroying the integrity of the country.<sup>36</sup>

In order to counteract the Muslim League demand for sovereign Muslim State, the Shiromani Akali Dal put forth the demand for a Sikh State. The main aim and the most prominent feature of this demand was to insist upon the partition of the Punjab. It was based on the argument that "the Panth"<sup>37</sup> demands the splitting up of the existing province of the Punjab with its unnatural boundaries so as to constitute a separate autonomous Sikh State in these areas of the central, north-eastern and south-eastern Punjab in which the overwhelming part of the Sikh population is concentrated and which because of the proprietors in it being mostly Sikhs and its general character being distinctly Sikh, is the *de facto* Sikh Homeland." The proposed Sikh State was to consist of the territories of" Central Punjab with Divisions of Lahore, Jullundur, parts of Ambala and Multan Divisions with the area comprised of Sikh States and Maler Kotla with certain hills in the North and North-East."<sup>38</sup>

Whatever the merits and demerits of this scheme, it proved to be realistic and far-sighted in advocating an exchange of population. The Sikh leaders clearly saw that it would be impossible for the Sikhs in general to live in a purely Islamic State. The demand for a Sikh homeland rested on an implied resumption of an exchange of population. The Sikh States were to provide the facilities for such exchange. It was stated that a State Commissioner or Board was to be constituted to evaluate and purchase the property of the emigrant population on reasonable terms."<sup>39</sup>

Mr. C. Rajagopalachari's formula conceded the principle of the

35. Copy of the Letter of Master Tara Singh, Khalsa College, Amritsar, S. H. R. No. 1815.

36. *The Tribune*, dated Dec. 2, 1942.

37. Literally *Panth* means path but the term is applied to the Sikhs collectively.

38. Justice Harnam Singh, *The Idea of Sikh State*, page 27 & 46.

39. Sadhu Sawrup Singh, *The Sikhs Demand Their Home Land*, Lahore, 1946, pages 71-73.

partition of the Punjab as he agreed to separate the "contiguous Muslim majority districts." The Rajaji formula stated ... "a commission shall be appointed for demarcating contiguous districts in the North-West and East of India wherein the Muslim population is in an absolute majority"<sup>40</sup> The Congress agreed to the principle that Muslim majority areas were to be given the right of self-determination and they were not to be compelled to join the Centre. This new development, according to Master Tara Singh, vitally affected the Sikhs.

There was no clarification by the Congress about the position of the Sikhs. In order to make their position clear, the Shiromani Akali Dal put forward the Azad Punjab Scheme.<sup>41</sup> According to this scheme a new Punjab was to be carved out after separating the overwhelming Muslim majority areas. It was argued that it was to be an ideal province with about an equal proportion of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. In the event of partition of the country it was to remain in the Indian Union.<sup>42</sup> Master Tara Singh explained the basis of this province in his letter to Sir Stafford Cripps. He said, "The Sikhs certainly cannot dominate in any decently large portion of the country and hence they do not demand domination. But a big province, much bigger than many of the existing provinces in area, population and wealth, can certainly be carved out in which the Sikhs are dominated by no single community."<sup>43</sup>

#### **Mr. Jinnah's Rejection of Partition Proposals**

Mahatma Gandhi accepted the principle of partition of the Punjab when he wrote to Mr. Jinnah, President of the Muslim League, saying, "I proceed on the assumption that India is not to be regarded as two or more nations but as one family consisting of many members of whom the Muslims living in the North-west zones, i.e., Baluchistan, Sindh, North West Frontier Province and that part of the Punjab where they are in an absolute majority over all other elements and in parts of Bengal and Assam where they are in an absolute majority, desire to live in separation from the rest of India ... The areas should be demarcated by a Commission approved by the Congress

40. *S.D.I.S. Vol. II*, page 549.

41. *Congress te Sikh* (Punjabi), by Master Tara Singh (1945), pages 3-4.

42. *Swagati Address Azad Punjab Conference, Amritsar* (Punjabi), 28th February, 1944.

43. The letter of Master Tara Singh dated 1.5.42. Khalsa College, Amritsar, S.H.R. 1815.

and the League. The wishes of the inhabitants of the areas demarcated should be ascertained through votes of the adult population of the areas or through some equivalent method. If the vote is in favour of separation, it shall be agreed that these areas shall form a separate State as soon as possible after India is free from foreign domination."<sup>44</sup> Mr. Jinnah, did not agree with Gandhiji because he opposed the partition of provinces. In a reply he argued that he did not want separation on the basis of plebiscite in which all inhabitants could participate but he wanted the issue to be decided on the basis of "self-determination confined to the Muslims alone." He wrote to Gandhiji, "We claim the right of self-determination as a nation ... You are labouring under the wrong idea that "self-determination" means only a "territorial unit" ... Ours is a case of division and carving out two independent sovereign states by way of settlement between two major nations, Hindus and Muslims and not of severance or secession from any existing union."<sup>45</sup> Again on September 25, 1944, Mr. Jinnah wrote to Gandhiji, "If this term were accepted and given effect to, the present boundaries of these provinces would be maimed and mutilated beyond redemption and leave us only with husk."<sup>46</sup> After the failure of the talks with Gandhiji, Mr. Jinnah said to the representative of the London *News Chronicle*: "There is only one practical, realistic way of resolving the Muslim-Hindu differences. This is to divide India into two sovereign parts - Pakistan and Hindustan by recognising whole of the North West-Frontier Province, Baluchistan, Sindh, Punjab, Bengal, and Assam as sovereign Muslim territories as they now stand."<sup>47</sup> It is significant to note that Mr. Jinnah accepted in 1947 almost the same terms and conditions regarding the Punjab and Bengal as were offered to him by the Rajaji formula, and Gandhiji.

#### **'The Conspicuous Part' by Dr Mohammad Iqbal**

According to Mr. Jinnah, Dr. Mohammad Iqbal played a conspicuous part though it was not revealed at that time<sup>48</sup> "in consolidating the Muslim League influence in the Punjab. Not only did

44. Gandhi Ji's letter dated 24th Sept. 1944, *To the Protagonist of Pakistan*, p. 132-33.

45. Mr. Jinnah's letter dated 21st Sept. 1944. *Mahatma Gandhi, Last Phase*, Ahmedabad, 1958, Vol. I, page 95.

46. Mr. Jinnah's letter dated 35th Sept. 1944, *S.D.I.C. Vol. II*, page 551.

47. Hector Bolitho. *Creator of Pakistan*, London, page 161.

48. *Our Struggle, 1857-1947*, Pak. Govt. publication, Appendix II, Introduction.

he convince Mr. Jinnah of "a separate federation of Muslim provinces"<sup>49</sup> as early as in 1937 but he also took effective steps to realise this objective. Dr. Iqbal had been persuading the Muslim members of the Unionist Party to join the Muslim League since 1936. He wrote to Mr. Jinnah in 1936 that the Muslim members of the Unionist Party were prepared to make following declaration: "That in all matters specific to the Muslim community as an all-India minority they will be bound by the decision of the League."<sup>50</sup> A strong contingent from the Punjab is expected to attend the Lucknow session of the League. The Unionist Muslims are also making preparations to attend under the leadership of Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan."<sup>51</sup>

Sir Sikandar's joining Muslim League particularly at a time when he had a solid majority of 119 members (95 Unionist including 74 Muslims—13 Khalsa National Board and 11 National progressive Party) in a House of 175 proved to be a blunder. By this action Sir Sikandar sounded the death knell of the Unionist Party of which he was the leader as he made the Muslim members of his party subject the discipline of the Muslim League whose aims and objects were not identical with those of that Party. The Unionist Party was devoted to inter-communal harmony while the Muslim League's objectives were "safeguarding the Muslim political rights" and "welfare of Indian Muslims" with the intention of acquiring Muslim ascendancy and Muslim domination. Sir Fazl-i-Husain, founder of the Unionist Party, firmly believed that any communal approach to the political tangle of the Punjab was likely to disintegrate the Unionist Party which was based on an economic programme and mutual co-operation among all communities.<sup>52</sup> It was on this account that Sir Fazl-i-Husain refused to accept the suggestion of Mr. Jinnah to join the Muslim League in 1936.<sup>53</sup> Sir Sikander's joining the Muslim League greatly enhanced the power and prestige of that party.

A political alliance, it has been significantly remarked, is always a case of rider and horse. Mr. Jinnah ultimately played the rider. Sir Sikandar had fundamental differences with Mr. Jinnah on the

49. *Ibid.*, Letter of Dr. Iqbal, dated June 21, 1937.

50. *Ibid.*, the Letter dated June 25, 1936.

51. *Ibid.*, the Letter dated Oct. 7, 1937.

52. Press Information Bureau Series No. 21, dated March 5, 1946, Page 1.

53. Azam Husain, *Fazl-i-Hussain*, Bombay, 1946, page 345.

future constitution of India. Sir Sikandar had framed a scheme for an Indian Federation. According to his scheme, India was to be divided into seven zones and each zone was to have its Regional Assembly.<sup>55</sup> The Central Government was, accordingly, to have limited powers. In the meeting of the Working Committee of the Muslim League on *February 4, 1940*, Sir Sikandar pleaded for two hours for the acceptance of his scheme but Mr. Jinnah rejected it on the ground that the Muslim League should confine its demands to the Muslim zones only and not to the whole of India.<sup>56</sup> This resulted in the Muslim League's resolution of March 1940 which is known as the Pakistan resolution. Sir Sikandar disliked the idea of Pakistan and he irreverently called it 'Jinnahistan' as he was convinced that Pakistan would mean massacre in the Punjab.<sup>57</sup> In this respect his estimate proved to be correct to a large extent. Perhaps, on account of the trouble created by the Khaksar movement and owing to the leanings of some of his party men towards the Muslim League, Sir Sikandar was always apprehensive that unless he walked warily and kept on the right side of Mr. Jinnah he would be swept away by a wave of fanaticism and was likely to be greeted with black flags wherever he went. Despite this he never reconciled himself with the Muslim League objective of Pakistan. He stated in the Punjab Legislative Assembly on March 11, 1941: "We do not ask for that freedom where there may be Muslim Raj here and Hindu Raj elsewhere. If that is what Pakistan means I will have nothing to do with it. I have said so before and I repeat it once again here on the floor of House."<sup>58</sup> Subsequently he was so much disgusted with the policy of the Muslim League and its tactics that he asserted in the Punjab Assembly: "Let us above all show to the rest of the world that we in the Punjab stand united and will not brook any interference from whatever quarter it may be attempted. Then and then alone will be able to tell meddling busybodies from outside hands off the Punjab."<sup>59</sup> Sir Sikandar, perhaps, did not want to risk his political career by quitting the Muslim League as it appeared

54. Mohammad Noman, *Muslim India*, Allahbad, 1942, page 330.

55. *S. D. J. C.* Vol. II, page 455-56.

56. Khaliqzaman, *Pathways of Pakistan*, page 234.

57. Penderal Moon, *Divide and Quit*, London 1961, page 20.

58. *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, dated March 11, 1941.

59. *Ibid.*

to him very difficult to wean his followers away from the League camp where he himself had taken them. He, however, resigned from the Muslim League Working Committee in 1942.<sup>60</sup>

### **Muslim League Influence Consolidated**

After the death of Sir Sikandar in 1942, the Muslim League adopted a very firm attitude towards the Unionist Party. Mr. Jinnah asserted that the Ministry in the Punjab should be named the Muslim League Coalition Ministry instead of Unionist Ministry as all the Muslim members who constituted the majority in the Unionist Party were members of the Muslim League. Sir Khizar Hayat Khan, who succeeded Sir Sikandar, did not agree as he wanted the regime of the Unionist Party to continue as had been agreed to under the terms of the Sikander-Jinnah Pact. Since Mr. Jinnah was very keen to have a Muslim League Ministry in the Punjab, he personally went to Lahore on the March, 20, 1944, and asked Sir Khizar to persuade his non-Muslim colleagues to join the Muslim League Coalition.<sup>61</sup> The Sikh and the Hindu colleagues of Sir Khizar offered to cooperate with the Muslim League primarily on the condition that "the idea of Pakistan is abandoned for the period of the war and, in order to enable all concerned to judge the merits of the scheme, its precise political and constitutional implications are fully explained and the geographical boundaries of the Punjab under the scheme of Pakistan as well as the principles, to be adopted for fixation of such boundaries, are indicated as clearly as practical." This was not acceptable to Mr. Jinnah who was of the opinion that minorities in the Punjab had no right to urge upon the League compromise on issues of an all-India character as these matters did not come within their rights as provincial minorities.<sup>62</sup>

This attitude of Mr. Jinnah towards the Punjab minorities, especially the Sikhs, was fundamentally different from that of the Congress. The Congress considered the Sikhs an important minority of India as is clear from the Nehru Report whereas Mr. Jinnah always considered the Sikhs a provincial minority. This was one of the reasons why the Congress succeeded in winning over the Sikhs whereas the League failed.

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50. Khaliqzaman, *Pathway to Pakistan*, page 280.

61. Khaliqzaman, *Pathways to Pakistan*, page 322.

62. *Ibid.*, page 323.

## GENESIS OF PARTITION OF THE PUNJAB 1947

Soon after Mr. Jinnah adopted a very firm attitude towards the Unionist Party and intimated the following terms of alliance to Sir Khizar Hayat Khan :

1. That every member of the Muslim League party in the Punjab Assembly should declare that he owed his allegiance solely to the Muslim League party in the Assembly and not to the Unionist Party or any other party.
2. That the present label of the Coalition namely the Unionist Party should be dropped.
3. That the name of the proposed coalition should be Muslim League Coalition Party.<sup>63</sup>

The leader of the Unionist Party could not agree to such terms as it would have dealt a death blow to his party. Consequently the Muslim League members of the Punjab Assembly whose strength had risen from 1 to 22 crossed over to the opposition just before the dissolution of the Assembly for the elections of 1946.<sup>64</sup>

### **Muslim League Victory in Elections**

The elections of 1946 proved a turning point in the history of the Punjab. The Muslim League secured 73 seats of the Punjab Legislative Assembly out of 85 seats contested whereas the Unionist party won only 19 seats out of 99. The Muslim League polled 75.26 per cent votes whereas the Unionist Party polled only 26.61 per cent votes. The League emerged as the largest single party in the Punjab Legislative Assembly.<sup>65</sup> Despite the Muslim League's victory in the election Sir Khizar Hyat Khan formed a coalition Ministry with the support of the Akali Party<sup>66</sup> and the Congress Party. He was right, to some extent, in foreseeing that the Muslim League with

63. Press information Bureau, *Government of India Series No. 21*, dated 5th March, 1946 page, 5.

64. *Ibid.*

65. Press Information Bureau Series No. 22, dated March 5, 1946, pages 5, 10 and 12. The relative strength of the various parties just after elections of 1945-46 was :

Muslim League	73 seats	Akalis	21
Unionist	19 „	Independent	11
Congress	51 „	Total Seats	175

66. The Akali Party was formed of the reformist Sikhs who wanted to reform their religious shrines. After the enactment of the Gurdwara Act, 1926, the Akali party entered politics. In the elections of 1937, the Akali Party won 10 Sikh seats. In the elections of 1945-46 it secured 21 seats. *Ibid.*



all its zest for Pakistan was not likely to come to terms with the Non-Muslim political parties. He, therefore, formed a ministry as a matter of political expediency. But this had a very adverse effect on the Muslims of the Punjab who had been playing a leading role in the Punjab politics as their numbers entitled them to. Now for the first time their largest party found itself totally excluded by an undreamt of combination of the Congress, Unionists and Akali Party. If Sir Khizar had not formed the ministry and the League leaders had been left with some hope of office, they would have been compelled, just in order to gain power, to adopt a more conciliatory attitude towards the minorities. In that case they would have been less tempted to stir up strife.

The election results in 1946 had clearly indicated that the Muslims of the Punjab were solidly behind the Muslim League and were aspiring to establish Pakistan with the Punjab as one of its provinces. In that event the Sikh and Hindu minorities of the Punjab would have been left in Pakistan. In order to avoid this, the Sikhs and the Hindus of the Punjab insisted on the partition of the Punjab. They demanded the creation of a 'Sikh-Hindu Province.' Giani Kartar Singh stated in *A Case for a New Sikh Hindu Province in the Punjab* : "If this demand is not conceded, it will mean the ruin of the Hindu martial as well as commercial classes under the permanent domination of those who believe in their being a separate nation. Similarly the Sikhs, 95 per cent of whose world population resides in the Punjab, will become politically extinct. A people who, not hundred years ago, were the rulers of this land would become subservient to those whom they had conquered and ruled. This is unjust, unfair and preposterous and shall not be permitted. Therefore, by the right of self-determination, by the right of majority and by the inherent right of a culturally homogeneous people to live their own life, the division of the Punjab is absolutely essential."<sup>67</sup>

67. Giani Kartar Singh, *The Case for A New Sikh-Hindu Province in the Punjab*, Delhi, 1946, page 9.

## Some Aspects of Guru Nanak's Mission\*

DR BALBIR SINGH

### PART ONE

#### I

Your Excellency, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am thankful for the privilege afforded to me to address you in the series of Guru Nanak lectures. Since the biographical sketch of Guru Nanak has already been given in a succinct manner by my predecessor Bhai Jodh Singh, I do not propose to enter into the elaboration of his life narrative. I would rather confine myself to some salient aspects of his tenets and their moral or spiritual implications. If in this exposition I introduce an anecdote, it will be to illustrate either the peculiarity of his method or the depth of his reflection.

I am also conscious of the difficulty inherent in talking on a topic that intrinsically relates to the Punjab, to an audience in Tamil Nadu.

Geographically, the Punjab and Madras are the farthest from each other. There is the language barrier too. The two vernaculars employing different idiom belong to the dissimilar linguistic stocks. No wonder then there has been some difficulty for the people of this region to understand the essential nature of the Sikh religion.

#### II

Guru Nanak was born in A.D. 1469 in the village of Talwandi near Lahore (now in Pakistan). Before his advent the region of the Punjab had not produced a single leader of the *Bhakti* School. The orthodoxy consisted in the vocation of the *Pandits* and *Prohits* whose main concern was the rigid enforcement of the caste rules and to preside over the ceremonial occasions, and also to minister to the sacramental needs with the precision of a mechanical ritual. Beyond the pale of this orthodoxy, plying their trade using the ancient language out of the range of understanding of the simple folk, were the many heterodox sects owing allegiance to *Yoga*, *Sanyas*, *Bairaga*, *Avadhuts*

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\*Two lectures delivered at the University of Madras as *Guru Nanak Lectures*, 1970-71, reprinted with the kind permission of the University granted under their letter No. G. 2/3896 of September 18, 1971.

and so on representing the various phases of the old cults. Neither there were any big temples in this region. Besides some hill spots dedicated to various goddesses, there was the Kurukshetra with its ancient sacred lake and a small temple with historical roots dedicated to one particular form of Shiva known as *Srihanu*, which lent its name to the District of Thanesar. No wonder then, that with the sole exception of the Kangra incident, Mahmood of Ghazni had to go out of the Punjab in the rampage of temple demolitions. This points to the aridity of this region inasmuch as emotional type of *Bhakti* related directly or indirectly to *Bhagwata Dharma*. Over here then, indeed Guru Nanak's labour was the pioneer work. It is in this area that he preached and practised humanism. He saw that there is a great gap between man and man. He intensely felt for the low-born and the down-trodden, that he fully identified himself with them.

Says Nank :

Nichā andri nich jāti nichī hoo ati nichu  
Nānaku tin kai sangi sāthi wadiā siu kiā ris  
Jithai nich smāliani tithai nadri teri bakhsis

(AG, P. 15)

I am the lowliest of the low born. Even from the lowliest I am  
the lower most.

I seek their company.

Association with the great is of no use.

The mercy of God blesses those who care for the neglected.\*

He felt that the gap between man and God is also much widened and unless this fissure is bridged, the breach between man and man cannot be repaired. The high placed men can never come closer to the poor unless a realisation comes about, that essential unity of man is linked up with the unity of God. With this type of humanism he identified himself with the low born people to lift them up.

Yet there was another gulf and that was between the Hindu and the Musalman. This was the widest chasm for any reformer to close. The idea of equality of religions as a practical proposition was a hazardous theme. In the time of Sultan Sikandar Lodhi the conditions were such :

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\*All the translations from the *Adi Granth* (abbr. AG) are by the author of the article except where particularly indicated.

#### SOME ASPECTS OF GURU NANAK'S MISSION

"On one occasion he carried his zeal to cruelty and injustice for a Brahmin having been active in propagating the doctrine that 'all religions, if sincerely practised, were equally acceptable to God', he summoned him to defend this opinion in his presence, against twelve Mohammedan divines, and on his refusing to renounce his tolerant maxim, put him to death." (Elphinstone, *The History of India*, p. 410.)

Sikander sat on the throne in 1489 and continued to rule till his death in 1517, when Guru Nanak was 48 years old. There was a moral bankruptcy in the attitude of the Sultans towards Hindus. Firoz Tughluk in his autobiography *Futuh-at-i-Firuz Shahi* has described his services to the cause of Islam with a sense of pride. His sole motive of imposing *Jizya* was to cause humiliation and to speed up the flow of conversions. He also mentions the destruction of the new Hindu temples at his hands.

Regarding the Sufis, there is no doubt, that there were extremely good examples of tolerant behaviour, but these were individual cases. Inasmuch as Sufis as a class were concerned, the position was different.

"The Sufis of both Chishtia order and Suhrawardy order were the pillars of orthodoxy and were the first to introduce religious bigotry in the Sultanate. As noted by Aziz Ahmad (*Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment*, p. 134.), "Muinuddin Chisti indulged in acrimonious polemics against the Hindus. Sayyid Nuruddin Mubarak Ghaznavi, a Shaikh of the Suhrawardy order had been appointed Shaikh-ul-Islam by Iltemish. He led an Ulema deputation to the Sultan with a request that the Hindus should be given an ultimatum to accept Islam or to face death." (Kardikar, *Islam in India*, p. 105.)

#### III

Guru Nanak's works are contained in the sacred volume of the Sikhs, known as *Adi Granth* or *Guru Granth Sahib*. The whole volume contains about 5894 hymns written by about 37 persons, out of which 974 are the contribution of Guru Nanak. The *Adi Granth* commences with *Japji* of Guru Nanak about which Macauliffe remarks that it is considered by the Sikhs a key to their sacred volume and an epitome of its doctrine. The opening hymn as translated by Macauliffe

reads :

"There is but One God whose name is true, the creator, devoid of fear and enmity, immortal, unbroken self-existent."

This rendering has been imitated with or without modification by most of the Sikh scholars writing in English. However an improved version of it is available in the *Gospel of the Guru Granth Sahib* by Duncan Greenlees, whose paraphrase runs as follows :

"One Supreme Being, the true and eternal Name, the Creative Person, fearless and without enmity, the timeless Form, unborn and self-existing."

What Greenlees renders as 'One Supreme Being', it may be noted that for this in the original text, 'one is represented by the Numeral 1, and 'Supreme Being' is represented by the Vedic emblem of 'Om' which is pronounced as 'Omkar', which is not merely a symbol representing the Deity but a word identified with Divinity. The numeral '1', however, is just a digit with a value but is devoid of form, quantity or substance, The '1 Om' of the original would therefore signify :

'The One Formless, whose Form is His Word'.

Then, what Greenlees renders as 'The true and eternal name' has in the original: 'Sati namu'. This joined with the previous phrase would complete the sense thus :

'1 Om Sati Namu'

"The One Formless whose Form is His Word.  
The Word is his abiding Name".

This really signifies that the Form of the Formless One will be revealed by His Word. Lest this should sound as an echo of the Gospel of St. John. I quote here the Vedic Text :

'Ysya Pratima Nasti Tasya Nam mahd Yasah'

'The One who has no picture, His Name is His Great Glory'

Now we revert again to the paraphrase of Greenlees and read "Creative Person". In the context, it should mean the Word is the Creator (*Karta*), and the Word is the Person (*Purkhu*), the male. The significance is obvious. The Word is His creative power which is not to be identified with *shakti*, the female creative energy, of the *Shaiva*

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concept, or the active spouses of the personal male gods of *Vaishnaviwas*. The underlying idea being, the Formless One is free from any encumbrance of the obligation of a spouse. Now we have the complete sense which I would repeat :

“The One Formless whose Form is His Word.  
The Word is his abiding Name. The Word  
is the Creator and the Word is the Man.”

In this definition of God, you will notice hardly any Muslim influence. It is only Macauliffe's rendering such as : ‘There is but one God’, from which originates the flavour of the semitic accent of the Koran.

#### IV

The source of monotheism of Guru Nanak has been a point of discussion with scholars. Most of them have been inclined to ascribe it to the Muslim influence. It may be a fruitful search to look into the origin.

It is well known that Guru Nanak came in touch with the religious leaders of various sects and denominations that flourished in his time. Of all these the most important was his contact with the *Yogis* and *Sidhas* inclusive of those that professed and practised Buddhist *Tantrik* cults. With regard to the latter, there is a significant utterance by him which opens with the line :

‘Rnanā Hoiā Bodhiā puras hoay siād’

(AG. p. 1242)

‘That the women have become Buddhist and men have become hunters.’

Obviously, the Guru is referring to the current *Tantrik* cult prevailing in certain regions. In M. E. Eliade's book, *Yoga Immortality and Freedom*, we read :

“According to Buddhist tradition, *Tantrism* was introduced by Asanga (C. 400 A.D.), the eminent *Yogachar* master, and by Nagarjuna (second century A. D.), the brilliant representative of *Madhyamika* and one of the most famous and mysterious figures in medieval Buddhism ... There is reason to suppose that *Vajaryana* (‘Diamond Vehicle’), the name under which Buddhist *Tantrism* is generally known, appeared in the beginning of the fourth century and reached its apogee in the eighth. The *Guhya Samaja-*

*Tantra* which some scholars attribute to Asanga is probably the earliest *Vajaryanic* Text and certainly the most important."

A derivative variety of some such cult from the present stock of Buddhist *Tantrism* but basically following the *Guhya Samaja* was obviously in the mind of the Guru when he is making a reference to the women having become Buddhist. In continuation of it, he further says

Sil snjamu such bhṇani khāñā khāju ahāju  
saramu giā gharu āpanaj pati uthai chali nāli  
Nānak sachā eku hai our nā sachā bhali.

(AG, p. 1242)

They have lost their morality and self-restraint.  
They violate purity and they eat what is forbidden.  
The sense of shame has forsaken them and so also  
the sense of honour.

It may be noted that in chapters VI and XV of *Guhya Samaja Tantra* permission is given for the employment of various kinds of flesh for ceremonial use.

From this, it is clear that for the purpose of ritual observances the types of meat which could be used admits of a big variety. The list includes the meat of cow, elephant, horse and dog. The human flesh is not excluded. These *tantric* cults had the easy *Vamachar* side to it, the underlying thought being the union of Shiva and Shakti. We read in Eliade's book :

The *Vamacharis* expect to attain identification with Siva and Sakti through ritual indulgence in wine, meat and sexual union. The *kularnavtantra* (VIII, 107 ff) even insists that union with God can be obtained only through sexual union. And the famous *Guhya Samaj Tantra* categorically affirms: No one succeeds in attaining perfection by employing difficult and vexing operations, but perfection can be gained by satisfying all one's desires. The same text adds that sensuality is permitted: one may, for example, eat any kind of meat, including human flesh, that the *tantrist* may kill any kind of animal, may lie, steal, commit adultery, etc.

Although the early society belonging to the *Guhya Samaja*, in the

course of centuries, had split into various sections, and *Sahajyana* was one of its later group developments, yet they all remained under the basic influence of the parent stock. The time over the centuries could not obscure the *Yogachar Buddhist* origination of the *Guhya Samaja*. That is the reason why the Guru using the word *Bodhian* says : "The women have become Buddhist and men have become hunters." The men had to hunt for various types of flesh for ritualistic needs, such special commodities (some of them forbidden) not being available from the usual sources.

It seems the Guru used the word "*Bodhian*" purposely. It was to show the wide gulf that separated the current *Vamachari Tantric* version from the parent Buddhism, that laid emphasis on moral sensitivity, on self-restraint and on the selection and purity of food based on the principles of non-violence. The last line of the above utterance is :

'Nānak sachā eku hai aur nā sachā bhali'

It means : 'Nanak says, do not search for another truth. He, The One, alone is true.'

It seems the Guru is conscious that the Tantric cult has a religious purpose, that those who practise have a philosophic ground, and that their aim is to reach the goal through a short circuit. According to *Guhya Samaja* this is explained by the theory :

"All contraries are illusory, extreme evil coincides with extreme good, Budhahood can (within the limits of this sea of appearances) coincide with supreme immorality and all for the very good reason that only the universal void is, and everything else being without ontological reality. Whoever understands this truth (which is more especially the Truth of the *Madhyamika* Budhists, but to which other schools subscribe at least in part) is saved."

The Guru's emphasis on 'The One' as the sole reality is in reference to the Doctrine of the Sunya (the void) which claimed that nothing besides has ontological existence. The creed of Sunya had pervaded, in varying degrees, all the cults associated with Yoga. But it looks the Guru had come in contact with some original version of the *Madhyamika Karka*. To illustrate this point, I quote from one of the old *Vrittis* on the *Karka*. It reads :

Sūnyam Ādhyatmikam pasya pasya sunyam bahir gam,



na Vidyate so pi kaścid yo bhayati śūnytam

(*Bhagavata-Madhyamika Vritti*)

The Guru repeats this in his own words :

Aṇtri sṇuṇṇ bāhri sṇuṇṇ tribhavaṇ sṇunamsṇuṇṇ

Chauthe sṇunai jo narū jānai tā kau pāpu na pṇuṇṇ

(AG, p. 943)

The meaning of the *Karika Vritti* is.

Look inside and see it is sunya.

See also sunya outside. The man

realising the fact of sunya inside

and sunya outside is also sunya himself.

What the Guru says in his own language is essentially the same. It is a remarkable piece of evidence how the *Madhyama Karika* and its old *Vritti* were a living force with the *Sidhas* in the time of Guru Nanak. I may, however, add that the Guru is reproducing the *Madhyamika* view in order to refute it which he does in the stanza that immediately follows it.

The word Sunya is very much in vogue in the *Adi Granth*. Guru Nanak uses it in a different connotation than originally intended by the *Madhyamik* school. It is in the discussion with the exponent of *Sunya* that Guru Nanak's thought found its orientation to the emphasis of the One, The Supreme, The Real, The Truth.

## V

Guru Nanak made the observation :

"Jogi sṇuni dheāvani jete alakh nāmu Kartāru.

(AG. p. 465)

All the Yogis meditate on *Sunya* (although for begging alms) they shout *Alakh* (the unknown) which is the epithet of the Creator.

These *Yogis* were carrying the leaven of libertinism emerging from the ethical implications based on the metaphysics of the Void. The position which the *Madhyamik* took was extreme. Their tenet was that Existence is void of reality in itself. They believed that what is produced by causes is not produced in itself and therefore does not exist in itself. They preached that the phenomenon of the world is the continuous production of appearance, not substantial, but only subsisting by the Void existence. In other words, their position can be summed up in the Paradox: Things are by virtue of what they are not and they

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owe origin to this not-being which is their ground. They inculcated the precept that wisdom lies in the realization of the Vacuity of things and that this knowledge would lead to the goal of *Nirvana*.

In the *Adi Granth* (the Sikh scripture), *Sunya* has been dealt with in a different way. Its influence is traceable to *Madhyamika* partly directly, as already noticed above, and partly indirectly to *Hath Yoga*. But in the Sikh literature, *Sunya* lost its ontological significance. It became only a method of self-restraint, a mode of control of desires. It became a symbol for the well regulated and disciplined life. In the *Adi Granth* it is said :

Jiwat marai marai phuni jiwai  
aisay Snuni Samāiā

(AG, p. 332)

It means: the man has to die to self and then rise to life.

This is how one should submerge into *Sunya*.

To die 'to self, to rise to higher living is an idea oft-repeated in the *Adi Granth*. Says Guru Nanak :

"Jiwatu marai tā subhu kichhu soojhai Aṅtari jānai sarb diā"

(AG, p. 940)

If you die in self, you will know the entire Truth.

You will inwardly feel the compassion which draws together all living beings.

The idea expressed here has an illusive metaphysical subtlety.

A more palpable version of it occurs in the work of Ernest Renan (1823-92) which I quote :

To act well in this world one must die within himself—  
man is there to realise great things for humanity,  
to surpass the vulgarity in which the existence of almost  
all individuals drag on.

*Sunya* seen in this perspective of death within oneself is a process to cleanse the mind. It is a procedure to empty out the contents of consciousness. It is a discipline to drain out the cravings and latent propensities of the mind. Now all this reflects the denial side. Obviously, it is the negative aspect. The Sikh scripture does not stop short at it but goes beyond it. It does not pause at the Negative. It affirms that via the negative the self must ascend. From its own ashes, the Phoenix is to spring up and soar Heaven wards. For

Guru Nanak the two aspects, the negative and positive are not disconnected. They occur side by side. The two together form one integrated discipline for the realisation of Truth. He says:

“Andinu rātā manu bairagi snuni mandali gharu pāiā  
Ādi purukhu aprmparu piārā satigur alakhu lakhāiā”

(AG. p. 436)

It means :

‘The detached mind, ever attuned ‘within,  
has made its dwelling within the sphere of *Sunya*.  
To me is revealed, by the Guru,  
the beloved who lives beyond, the primeval  
Lord, the transcendent.’

## VI

As I have said above, the connotation in which the Guru used this word is different. Besides *Sadhana*, he regards *Sunya* as one of the powers of the Creator, as *Maya* is. To originate the phenomenal world the Creator uses both. The process of fashioning begins with *Sunya*. It is completed with *Maya*, ending in *Sunya* again. This construction and dissolution goes on as a cyclic occurrence :

Sṇunhu dharti akāsu upāy  
Binu thmā rākhay sachu kal pāy  
Tri bhawañ sāji mekhuli māiā āpi  
upāy khapādā (AG, p. 1037)  
Out of *Sunya* earth and sky were brought forth.  
Without a support they stand, only by the aid of Truth.  
The three worlds thus fashioned  
were bound together by the cord of *Maya*.  
He creates and destroys.

The difference between the position of the *Madhyamika* and Guru Nanak can be summed up. The negative position which the *Madhyamika* took became an ontological finality with them. The Guru took *Sunya* as a *Sadhana*. To him, it is death within, which makes the self rise to live again in a universal life of compassion to all mankind.

As I said earlier, Guru Nanak observed that all Yogis meditated on *Sunya*. He influenced them to modify this position. His work *Sidhagoshti* has the internal testimony to this fact. Instead of meditation on the *Sunya*, he prevailed upon them to adopt Truth in substi-

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tution thereof.

“Sachu aradhiā gurmukhi taru tārī  
Nānak boojhai ko vichārī”

(AG, p. 945)

If you contemplate Truth, you will be emancipated by Guru's grace.

But such a thoughtful person is rare.

His Truth, however, was different from the Buddhist occupation of it, where it is identified with *Nirvana*. His Truth includes and transcends the conception of immanent reality of the world.

“Sachu Sirandā sachā jāñiai sachrā parwadgāro  
Jini āpini āpu sājiā sachrā alakh apāro

(AG, p. 580)

Know the Truth, that Truth is the Creator and Truth is the sustainer.

Truth creates its own self. It is unknowable it is transcendental.  
Then again: “Sachu kartā sachu karñhāru

Sachu Sāhibu sachu tek

(AG, p. 52)

Truth is the Lord, Truth is the refuge.

Truth is the Creator, Truth is the cause of all.

Guru Nanak identified Truth with the One, The One God. This identification sharply distinguished it from the Buddhist nomenclature. It also differed from the amorphous varieties of meanings used to indicate the degrees of *Sunya* by the *Yoga* oriented cult groups.

His use of the word *Truth* had a double purpose. It was to posit a concrete reality as against the shadowy nothingness of *Sunya* and also to tone up the moral sense, the laxity of which had brought in a general apathy towards one's obligation.

Again we notice that the Guru is identifying the Truth with One. This was as it should be. Truth must be One. If it is fractioned it would lose its integrity, and its veracity would suffer. Guru Nanak's emphasis on this identification had a dual purpose. It was to replace the Zero of *Sunya* and to reduce the trinity of the three personal gods, Vishnu, Brahma, Shiva.

In his *Sidh Goshti*, he defines the *Yogi* :

Gurmukhi jogi jugti pachhāñai

Gurmukhi Nānak eko jāñai

(AG. p. 946)

The *Yogi* who recognises the One, understands the essential nature of *Yoga*

Again we read : Antri bāhri eko jāñai

(AG, p. 943)

He should realise the One who dwells inside and outside

Then again : Eke kaau ekā jāñai

haumai dooja doori kiā

(AG, p. 940)

Know the One as the One Truth.

The second is your own vanity which is to be cast aside.

It will thus be seen that Guru's monotheism was the direct outcome of the impact arising out of confrontation with *Sunyavad*. When I say this, I do not deny the influence of Islam, but this formed a contributory stabilising factor.

It may be realised that in Guru Nanak the performance of Sankracharya was re-enacted. Sankar originally believed in *Karama Kanda* but was drawn towards idealism. However, his confrontation with *Hinayana* of the Singhalese type resulted in the crystallization of the philosophic system of *Advaitism*.

It was the Buddhist theory that all is illusion which reacted with a rebound to posit the permanent reality behind the veil of illusion. Sankara controverted with vehemence the non-*Vedic* heresies with the tool of *Vivartvad* by spreading *Jnana marga*. Guru Nanak contended the moral inequities of *Sunyavad* derived from *Mahayana*, with the instrument of *Bhakti* diffusing the culture of devotional feelings for the comprehension of the Sublime.

For Guru Nanak's mission the conditions were not unfavourable. There was the Muslim theism poised in a broadside posture, and there was the spiritual stream of the saint poets that was gathering volume and speed to fertilise the arid land.

*Conclusion*—The monotheism of Guru Nanak evolved out of indigenous thought. It was not an ingredient assimilated from Arabic sources. Buddhism has been the greatest stimulating factor in the religious history of India. Sankar came across its *Hinayana* variety, where the approach to disillusionment is through the ethical discipline of self-restraint. Guru Nanak came in contact with the cults arising

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out of *Mahayana* which ramified into *Sunyavada*, *Yogachara*, *Vajrayana*, *Sahjyana*. Because of their great emphasis on the metaphysics of *Sunya*, the ethics resulting therefrom were the negation of the original *Hinayana* morality. Sankara's triumphant monism gave impetus to *Sanyas*. Guru Nanak's monotheism was to substitute *Sunya* with One Reality and to identify the same with Truth, thus providing a metaphysical base for morality. This gave an impetus to the practical aspect of his social reform which he aspired to.

#### PART TWO

As already mentioned, Guru Nanak was born in A. D. 1469. There were two other great Indian thinkers that took birth around about that time. I am referring to Vallabhacharya (1479-1531) and Chaitanya Mahaprabhu (1485-1553). Both were ardent exponents of the *Bhakti* tradition. In all the three there were similarities in the principle of love which they introduced into their devotion. Yet there were striking differences.

In Vallabha and Chaitanya, the dominant note was on the personal side of the Deity. It was the *Saguna* aspect which was supreme. Then there was the emphasis on the *Yugal murti* concept of the inseparably integrated couple, Radha and Krishna. Again there was the question of the mode of worship particularly with regard to the icon and its apotheosis. The ultimate reality for Guru Nanak was formless. He called it *Nirankara*, i.e., The One without form. The concept of *Nirankara* is different from the idea of *Nirguna*, though in general parlance they are treated as synonyms. Precisely speaking, *Nirankara* is formless, and *Nirguna* is qualityless, i. e., without any attribute. Guru Nanak called himself *Nirankari*, i.e., the upholder of the Deity without form. This exempted him from accepting a personal God with his human incarnations or recognising any of his image or symbol for idolatrous homage.

How he arrived at the concept of the Formless? For him it was a subjective intuition. He says :

Atam chin bhaai Nirknāri (AG, p, 45)

I had the vision of my own soul and I became a Nirankari.

Apart from this spontaneous revelation, it requires a great effort to conceive of something that does exist and is yet absolutely devoid of form. But the difficulty of conceiving the Formless God can now

be transferred to the realm of matter.

It is well known that modern physics has made a departure from its classical moorings. Einstein said, 'There is now hardly any difference between physics and metaphysics'. Infinitely small particle that forms the basis of matter is no longer palpable, not because it is invisible but because it does not possess the property of spatial expansion. Thus matter is nothing more than an act, an event, a mathematical value of quantified energy. As such, matter looks like a phantom and is now considered as 'waves of probability strung across a nexus of mathematical equation.' Matter has thus become *Nirakar* though not *Nirguna*. This, indirectly, by way of way of analogy, brings out the subtle difference between the Formless and Attributeless. This matter of scientists has gone so much out of form and shape that Edington remarked :

"The physical world consists so to speak of measure groups resting on shadowy background that lies outside the scope of physics."

If matter has no spatial quality, certainly the spirit has neither. There is no space to contain the spirit. If there is any such thing as space, it is in the spirit rather than the other way about. In other words, it is the spirit that projects space and not that the spirit has the essential property of spatial extension.

Once again this lends support to the view expressed in the Taitt. Upnishada : *etasmad atma akasas sambhutah* (II, I)

Verily from the Self arose the space.

Guru Nanak's view that God is formless was not derived as an inference from some speculative thought, nor was it a deduction from some intellectual canon. It was a direct apprehension arising out of his personal experience. It was the reflection of his own subjectivity in self-contemplation. The Formless God can however create forms. This sounds reasonable enough once it is conceded that the spirit originates space as postulated in the Taitt. Upnishada.

The Western point of view, however, is different. It is rooted in the principle of Form which is contrasted with matter. According to the metaphysics of Aristotle, soul is equated with form and the body is regarded as matter to which soul is related as form. Nature was however endowed with a desire by virtue of which the lower forms seek the higher and finally the pure Form which is God.

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This is in sharp contrast to what Guru Nanak believed about God as Formless. For him the highest thing was the Formlessness rather than the Form.

During the middle ages we find the Greek metaphysics invading the Muslim theological thought. It may be remembered that according to Aristotle both Matter and Form are eternal. The Muslim philosopher Al Kindi of Basra (c. 870 AD) discussed the relationship of Matter and Form. He came to the conclusion that Form is eternal but Matter is non-eternal. Again we find in Al Farabi, a Turk (870-950 AD), the same issue taken up and worked up to a conclusion entirely different. A little later Bu Ali Sena (980-1037 AD) also offered his opinion. His conclusion was that Matter is eternal and the Form is non-eternal. It may be remembered that the Aristotelian thought, that swung round the proposition of Matter and Form, was intimately related to the practical need of knowledge. It was assumed that knowledge was to be realised in the concrete particulars of sensible experience, of which Form is the essence, which Matter (as sense element) embodies.

These thoughts have been current in the Muslim Divines and have been provoking violent reactions. In the reign of Caliph Mustanajid, we find Bu Ali Sena's books being declared as heresies and being ordered to be burnt.

Guru Nanak's main doctrine was that God is formless. This was in sharp contrast to the conception that in God the most perfect form is achieved which resulted in great controversies amongst the Muslim divines and gave rise to divergent propositions. The Guru remarked: *Hukmi Hovan Akar*, 'That forms are created by the Divine Will', i.e., they are not eternal. Then, *Hukmi Hovan Ji*, i.e., 'souls are created by the Divine Will'. About the nature of the Divine will his remarks were brief and pithy. He said *Hukam Na Kahia Jai*: 'The Divine Will cannot be described'.

Nonetheless, he identified the Divine Will with Word (Sabd). His belief was that His Word reveals the form of the Formless and that the secret of forms lies in the Word.

The Greek philosophic thought of Form had tremendous impact in other fields, for example, Art. The one concern of the fine Arts in the west was the preoccupation with the Form and this was achieved in plastic art. The obvious result of this was that the beauty of the human body was worked up to such a pitch that the very form began to reflect the soul.



It may be recalled that Aristotle equated the form with soul. Hence Art acquired a philosophic dimension. Impelled by the desire to get at the superior form we find Appollo and other gods and goddesses, acquiring intensely exquisite human expression. The art thus became Anthropomorphic. This anthropomorphism invaded India too with the armies of Alexander, resulting in the consequent emergence of the sculpture of Gandhara school.

The indigenous art of India, however, had a different aim. In spite of what may have been indigenously achieved by way of specimens of feminine beauty, the ideals of India were basically different. Intrinsically India laid more stress on music than on achievements in the execution of plastic or pictorial art. By the end of the 16th century, when Ahobala completed his thesis known as *Sangita-Parijata*, the Indian music had reached its highest development. With all the nuances of the quarter tones based on the original theory of the three 'grams', India had comparatively gone far ahead of all its western rivals. This is equally true of north as well as south of India. Music, it may be recalled, is an abstract art. There is no involvement of any figurative work. Guru Nanak uses it as a spiritual *śadhna* for the comprehension of the Formless. He conceives God as music, an eternal melody, a wordless tune, a soundless rhythm, a spontaneous harmony and associated it with *Anahad Sabda*. He seeks to be in tune with it. He says: *Sabdi Anahada so saho rata Nanak kahai vichara*, 'I am suffused with the Eternal Word, says poor Nanak'.

Guru Nanak calls himself a *Dhadi*, a minstrel :

'Dhādhi Kathe Akath Sabdi Savāriā.' (AG. p. 149)

I am transfigured as a minstrel through the influence of the Word.

This minstrel is now straining to sing the narrative of the Ineffable.

Guru Nanak's conception of Formless God with his method of devotional approach through the meditation on Name, which he practised and enjoined, was an effort to steer clear of the idea of a personal God with all the anthropomorphic implications, which developed so prominently in the *Samprdaya* of his contemporary, Vallabha-charya. This gave a new orientation to *Bhakti*, which has always been in relation to a person. *Bhakti* is a feeling or an affection towards something concrete. *Bhagvata Dharma* was, therefore, always devotionally inclined to the incarnations of the Supreme Being. When ele-

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ments of *Bhakti* appeared in *Mahayana*, it created a demand for a personal type of Divinity. That is why we had the *Bodhi sattava*, and much latter, in *Vajrayana*, the *Dhyani Budhas* with their female counterparts as their divine energies. But Guru Nank's monotheism was deeply rooted in the Formeless. He believed that the world of form must dissolve into the Eormless in order to gain liberation. This may not be achieved in the physical sense but the mind had to be cultivated to rise above the formal supports.

He said : Nirankar mih ākāru smāvai  
akal kala sachu sāchu tikāvai  
so naru garbh joni nahi āvai (AG. p. 414)

It means : The form has to dissolve into the formless.

The partial facts have to find their place  
or rest in the whole Truth.

Unless this is done there is no rest.

Man has to drift through the passage of  
the cycle of births.

The idea here is very clear. The fulfilment of being is reached through shedding the form and there is no rest till then. This just reverses the position qua the Aristotilian stand, which can be summed up : 'There is no rest short of complete fulfilment of Being, matter can never rest until it is made complete by form which represents its potential Being'.

## II

It is generally belived that the period of Mohammedan rule was the time of reformation. It was this duration extending practically over half a millennium that witnessed the resurgence of the type of devotionism that brought about deep-seated changes in the character of the people. It was during this epoch that the Hindu mind evolved the spirituality, they could fall back upon under the extreme anguish of an alien culture. It was this era which saw the vernaculars emerging into full-fledged medium of expression. This was the period during which *Adi Granth* was compiled (A.D. 1604). This sacred anthology thus came into existence representing the entire phase of the *Bhakti* movement of North India, beginning with Jaidev (12th century), and ending with the works of Gurn Arjan (A. D. 1563-1606), to which were later incorporated the writing of Guru Tegh Bahadur (1621-1675) and a distich of Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708). Most of these saint

poets had the personal experience of what they inwardly felt as the concussive impact of the alien culture. Jaideva was in the court of Raja Lakshman Sen whose kingdom fell in 1199 A.D. at the hands of the Khalji invaders. Namdev (1270-1350) saw the fall of Devgir (C 1308 AD) at the hands of Malik Kafur. Kabir (1440-1518) was the victim of oppression exercised by the Lodi Sultanate. Guru Nanak himself witnessed the holocaust which Babar's invasion entailed. Guru Arjan was put to death arising out of the orders of Emperor Jahangir. Guru Tegh Bahadur suffered martyrdom because of Emperor Aurangzeb's policy. In the *Adi Granth*, all these heroes and martyrs have their poetic expression. It is their spirit that breathes in its pages; it is their aspirations that take us to the inward depths of our beings right up to the very edge of the spring of the religious emotion.

The veneration of the *Adi Granth* is a phenomenon in itself. It has far excelled the respect shown to any religious book in the world. In its origin it was the mark of the birth of a gospel in the language and idiom of the people, that gave to them the message of liberation transcending the caste barriers. *Adi Granth* is not a book of chronicles. It is the living memoir of the spirit of *Bhakti* that renews and stabilizes strength and composure amid tribulations. For the devotee, *Adi Granth* is not merely a book of hymns and psalms but is a personified guide, whose wise counsel affords a cushion to the weary head. For the student of history, it can provide a peep into the integrity of a scripture which treasures the diversity of fervour of varied religious thoughts inclusive of Muslim. It will also help to understand the vital mechanism that works unwittingly towards harmony. It may in addition bring about the Truth that when varied religious emotions are integrated they evolve a natural secularism strong and enduring. It may also show that the converse is not true and that is why a loud appeal in the name of secularism meets with a poor response and fails to achieve the object. Yet this is not all. *Adi Granth* transcends any formulation about it. It is there that the spirit reflects its form in the wide spectrum of the iridescence of its songs.

Rabindra Nath Tagore said : Ever in my life I have sought

Thee with my songs. (*Gitanjali*)

The Guru said : Tihu lokā maihi sabadu rawiā hai

āpu gaiā manu māniā (AG, p. 351)

As my ego faded I got the realisation :

He is a Song (Sabad) encompassing the three worlds.

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For the Guru, the idea of Formlessness is not a conceptual abstraction. It is a living spiritual power whose omnipotence is reflected in giving to each its form and nature. Although the *Sabad* is the invisible word of God, its music is universal. The entire cosmos is resonant with the its echo. He is ever mirrored in his Word. For Gūru Nanak, *Sabad* is a Word, a Name, a Song, a refrain that breathes and keeps time with the rhythm of the heart. It is an eternal note that rhymes with the pulse of the cosmic beat. For him, the Word is the spiritual energy, the Supreme Wisdom, the Divine Love. You can get at it provided you pay the price for it. You have to give up your 'ego sense'. He emphasizes his belief :

Haumai nāwai nāli virodhu bai doay na wasahi ik thai

(AG. p. 560)

Self-conceit and Divine Name are incompatible.

This idea was expressed by the German mystic Jacob Boehme (1575-1624) in his own crisp way. He followed Guru Nanak a century later. He said, "I do not collect for my knowledge words from many books, but I have the Word within me. For heaven and earth and all beings, also God himself, lie in man". Boehme, the believer in the Word, ultimately propounded the theory that God is present in all aspects of creation, that man is also an aspect, that evil results from the attempt of the man to become the whole rather than remain an aspect. This in fact is the same thing what the Guru said, 'that the Divine Word and self-conceit are antagonistic to each other'.

Now it is to be noted that Guru Nanak calls himself a minstrel and he declares that he is transformed by the influence of the Word. His exact expression is *Sabad Sanwaria*. By the power of the Word you can reclaim a criminal. That was his belief. There is an anecdote which illustrates this point. The Guru with his companion Mardana is said to have come across a robber, Sajjan by name, who lived under the guise of a holy man. He had built a mansion for the wayfarers where he would lodge them. He would then murder them while asleep, appropriating their belongings. The Guru and Mardana were also comfortably lodged in the mansion. But the Guru would not sleep. He sat up, and that made Sajjan very restless and impatient. Ultimately, the Guru sang a song and Mardana played on the Rebeck. It was a tune that haunted and the words were heart-piercing.

On occasions like these, his words would be sharp. They would

give a thrust like a rapier, or with the twist of his song he would worm a hole into the sinner's heart and let the shaft of divine light gain entrance.

That is how Sajjan, the robber, was reclaimed.

Mardana a low caste musician was the constant companion in most of the travels of Guru Nanak. Mardana was adept in playing on the rebeck. There is one thing very remarkable, wherever Guru Nanak went he tried to imbibe the local tunes characteristic of the region. These territorial airs were particularly effective in producing the desired effect in those areas. The use of local tunes is so wide spread in his songs that they cover the area from the Northern region of Tukhar\* to South India. He used the word *Dakhni* to show the distinctive character of the tunes of the South.

### III

Guru Nanak did not produce an elaborate system of religious philosophy, as it happened in the case of Vallabhacharya, his contemporary. He did not either write a vernacular commentary on *Bhagwat Gita* as was done by his predecessor Jnaneshwara which furnished a philosophic base to the movements originating in Maharashtra. His thoughts were like seeds that burst forth from the soil in which they were buried. His environment was the soil. His intense wish to better the lot of people was the seed: He did not labour to bring into existence syncretism of divergent religious systems. He produced a broad base to provide for the growth of Truth, Tolerance and a keen sense to carry out one's obligations. There was a social urgency in his thoughts. He condemned outright all those who lived on alms.

He raised his voice against begging and declared :

Ghāli khāy kichhu haththu dehi

Nānāk rāhu pachhaṇhi say.

(AG. p. 1245)

Eat only that what you earn by the sweat of your labour. Even out of it give something to others. Those who follow this path will find the true path.

About Yogis he was equally critical :

Makhatoo hoi kai kann parāy

(AG. p. 1245)

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\*His *Bārāmāha* Tukhari is an example.

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The man who is unfit to earn his livelihood gets his ears split  
(becomes Yogi).

The above denunciation was about the men who are indolent and lazy, but there was another category, the rich people renouncing and taking to the beggars' life. There were even Rajas and princes belonging to this class. He had no soft corner for them. They should do their duty and not shirk it. He says :

Rovhi rāje kaan parāay  
Ghar ghar māghi bhikhiā jāay

(AG. p. 954)

The *rajas* now weep (repent),  
They beg from door to door.

They are the men who got their ears pierced.  
He was equally critical of the Muslim Mullah :

Giān vihoonā gāwai git  
Bhukhe mulāṇ ghare masiti

(AG. p. 1245)

The Mullah devoid of knowledge converts his home into a mosque (to attract alms). He sings songs (to excite pity).

It will thus be clear that this was one great distinguishing feature of Guru Nanak. He did not fall in line with other medieval saints, some of whom applauded the begger's bowl and other encouraged asceticism. Guru Nanak's Mission was different. It was not to get away from society but to reform it. To abolish the caste barriers, that was his intense desire. He was against the wearing of the sacred thread, a symbol of belonging to the higher castes. Throughout his life he went without this distinctive mark. He, therefore, thought himself belonging to the lower caste with whom he identified himself.

In Guru Nanak's *Bhakti*, the component of social reform was an integral part and that is why Sikhism ultimately emerged as a new dispensation with all the vigour of a new faith. This performance did not follow in the case of other saints or his contemporaries. Talking about Chaitanya, the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* observes :

Gradually however as has so frequently been the case with movements of Indian reform, their distinctive features of doctrine and observance became obscured, the surrounding

social order proved too strong and there was a general return to the forms of orthodox *Vaishnavism*. Statistics of their present numbers and strength do not seem to be available and there is little or nothing to mark them off from other Hindus who hold a theistic faith and worship Vishnu in one or other forms. (Vol. III, p. 335)

In spite of all the influences at reabsorption and relapse into Hinduism, the Sikhs have withstood the effect of the surrounding social order. Will there be any harm should this happen? I would like to say just a few words closely related to it. The Britishers while ruling India were interested in only one aspect of the Sikhs that is the fighting quality of the Sikh soldiers. It may be recalled that at one time forty per cent of the North Indian army was composed of Sikhs. In 1928 Major A. E. Baristow was deputed to enquire into matters relevant to the Sikhs with regard to the surrounding influences. I quote two passages from the report of Major Baristow :

"Sikhs in the Indian Army have been encouraged to regard themselves as a totally distinct and separate Nation; their national pride has been fostered by every available means, and the *Granth Sahib* or Sikh Scriptures are saluted by British officers of Indian regiments; the reason of this policy is not far to seek. With his relapse to Hinduism, and readoption of its superstitions and vicious social customs, it is notorious that the Sikh loses much of his martial instincts and greatly deteriorates as a fighting machine."

Further,

"It will be clear that the policy preserved in the Indian Army has been directed and rightly directed to the maintenance of the Sikh faith in its pristine purity, for the reason that any falting off from orthodoxy not only detracts from the fighting value of the Sikh soldier, but inevitably tends at the same time to affect adversely his whole attitude to the British power."

The last sentence of the paragraph above really means that when a Sikh is shaken off his traditional faith his attitude toward his own obligations undergoes a change.

#### IV

In the context of these circumstances, let us again revert to the

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subject of *Yoga*, reference to which occurs so often in Guru Nanak's works. It appeared to him that *Yoga* as such had outlived its usefulness. It provided an easy exit from facing the difficulties of the world and supplied the justification to negate obligations. Yet with all this Guru Nanak was not against *Yoga*. He wanted to assimilate it and utilise it as a means and not an end in itself. The *Yoga* for this purpose had to be refined and modified to suit the needs of the man who does not renounce the world. *Yoga* had, therefore, to be reconditioned. It has to be pressed to the service of householders. So far the practice of *Yoga* required the immobility of posture which was incompatible with the avocation of a householder. *Yoga*, therefore, had to become a mobile companion. A new version of it was found in *Sahaja Yoga*. The implication of it was that the technique of concentration by rigid enforcement of posture was to be avoided. On the contrary a habit of relaxed mood was to be cultivated free from the wrinkles of anxiety. This was to be done by cultivating increased reliance on the beneficence of providence.

He said :

"Jo kichhu karai bhalā kari māno  
sahaj jog nidhi pāwo

(AG p. 359)

Whatever He does, accept that as good. Thus gain the treasure of *Sahaja Yoga*.

He was not in favour of *Pranayama*. He would not go in for technicalities of *Hath Yoga*. He expressly forbade them.

*Sahaja Yoga* was considered a slow gradual process of self-containment. It was to recognise the fact that the mind is rooted in nature. Without disturbing the network of the root fibres, the consciousness was to grow. It was to rise towards the source of light and blossom forth.

Once this happens, the rest becomes easy. One finds a source of light inside. It is the glow of gems of intelligence within, that illumines the inner horizon. The lotus in the heart opens its buds. Its petals scatter the musk of pure longings that mingle with the universal spread of feelings and love. *Sahaja Yoga* is a mental harmony that subsists spontaneously without effort. It keeps the poise and balance which is not disturbed by the duties of the routine work of a householder. *Sahaja Samadhi* is an experience on the aesthetic plane. The senses within become spiritualised. The spirit



without becomes sensuous. A new base is created, a meeting ground comes into being. A tryst is formed for the yearnings to meet their object. The *Sahaj Samadhi* thus is not only a mental condition, it is a plane where the form and the Formless meet. It is an aesthetic ground where the mind while seeing the wonders is submerged into the sublime. Guru Nanak says :

Dekhi acharaju rahay bismādi

Ghati ghati sur nar sahaj samādhī

(AG, p. 416)

The men and Devas in their own places through the *Sahaj Samadhi* by seeing wonders are lifted to the realm of the Sublime.

*Sahaj Yoga* based on *Bhakti* brings out the fact that Heaven and Earth reveal their beauty to one who can suffuse them with the wealth of the inner longings of his own soul. Guru Nanak loved Nature. To him nature is not a veil of *Maya* to conceal the reality. On the other hand, it is Nature's beauty that manifests His splendor, He says :

Nānak sachu dātāru sinākhatu kudarti

(AG, p. 141)

The Lord is beneficent, the Lord is Truth,  
Nature reveals it.

His observation relevant to this topic is very significant.

Balhāri kudrati wasiā

Terā aṇtu na jāi lakhiā

(AG, p. 469)

I am all adoration

You who are Infinite dwell in Nature.

It implies that although you are Infinite and as such beyond comprehension, but there is another phase of yours. You dwell in Nature. This gives us an awareness of you.

The anecdote of his visit to Jagannath Puri is beautiful. It was evening. The Priests of the temple were to perform the worship, *Arti*. This is usually done by repeatedly waving lights set in a decorated tray before the enshrined Deity and singing in chorus the panegyric songs. Guru Nanak was inspired to compose his own song of *Arti* in Nature, Translated by Macauliffe it runs thus :

The sun and moon, O Lord, are Thy lamps; the firmament

Thy salver; the orbs of the stars the pearls encased in it.

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The perfume of the sandal is Thine incense, the wind is  
Thy fan, all the forests are Thy flowers, O Lord of light,  
What worship is this ? O thou Destroyer of birth ! Unbeaten  
strains of ecstasy are the trumpets of Thy worship

(i. e., the Divine Music resounds in Thy Temple)

Some three hundred years after Guru Nanak, an English poet  
David Vedder (1790-1834) wrote a poem "The Temple of Nature".  
He reproduces the sentiments of Guru Nanak. I give below his  
lines :

"Talk not of temples there is one  
Built without hands, to mankind given  
Its lamps are the meridian Sun  
And all the stars of Heaven  
Its walls are the Cerulean sky  
Its floor the earth so green and fair  
The dome is vast immensity  
All nature worships there.

You will agree that Vedder's poem moulded out of the matrix of  
the original English idiom sounds exquisite. Yet there is one thing  
it lacks. In the worship at the Nature's Temple there is no music.  
The Guru had said : *Anahata Sabd Vajant Bheri*. That is, the Divine  
music resounds at the temple. There has been a French poet, Charles  
Baudelaire 1821-67) who perhaps heard this music as a whispering  
sound. He said : 'Nature is a temple whose living pillars sometimes  
utter obscure words'. What to Baudelaire was the obscure words, to  
Guru Nanak was the Divine music. It was an irresistible call of the  
flute which he followed. That was his mission and the fulfilment of  
his being.

## Land Revenue Administration under Maharajah Ranjit Singh\*

SITA RAM KOHLI, M.A.

Information on the subject, which I take in this paper, "The Working of the Revenue System under Ranjit Singh," is so meagre that I often thought of giving up the quest. The historians of the period, whether Indians or Europeans, who have attempted to trace the rise and fall of Ranjit Singh's power, have contented themselves with making only a passing reference to his administration, while they have given a detailed and exhaustive account of the various battles he fought and won.

In the second place, no trustworthy information is forthcoming from the people, who have forgotten the old ways and methods. Some forty years back this difficulty could have been easily overcome; for some of the men who played an important part during the Sikh days were still alive.

Whatever little information is obtainable on the subject can be had from the records of the Khalsa Government itself, which—thanks to the Panjab Government—have been preserved so well up to this time. But even these records do not supply sufficient information on the details as to how the work was carried on in actual practice, since these papers are the abstract returns of revenue and the account sheets submitted to the Lahore Durbar by its various revenue officers. It is only here and there that one comes across a rule or an *'Ain* issued by the Maharajah to one of his *kardars*, that enables one to corroborate or test the accuracy of the conclusions otherwise arrived at. The *khasras* and *jamabandis*, which are the only sources of information on the assessment part of the Revenue System, were kept in the *ta'aluqa* or District records, and, as a result of subsequent revolutions and change of Governments, were either neglected altogether or thrown into the lumber-room of the *kardar's* house. A few of them I succeeded in obtaining from two old families in my native town,<sup>1</sup> and I am sure

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\*Journal of the Punjab Historical Society, Lahore, Vol. VII, part I, p. 74 to 89.

1. Hans Raj Chopra and Raja Dhan Raj Singh, B.A., representatives of two diffe-

[Contd. on page 435]

#### LAND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION UNDER MAHARAJAH RANJIT SINGH

that they will be forthcoming in numbers if further quest be made in different towns of the province. The entire sources have not been exhausted, but whatever I could investigate in a short period of four months, I beg to submit the results thereof in this paper. The facts have been taken from the records of Ranjit Singh's government and the conclusions are my own.

On the 27th Har Sambat 1856 (July 9, 1799 A. D.) Ranjit Singh, then a young lad of nineteen, entered and Extent and the bound- occupied Lahore without much opposition. A aries of the kingdom couple of years later, he wrested Amritsar from the Bhangi Sardars, and within the next six years he reduced a portion of Rachna and Sindh Sagar Doabs Having taken possession of the political and religious capitals of the Panjab, Ranjit Singh now more seriously thought of creating a kingdom for himself. In 1806 A.D., he turned his attention towards the rich plains of Sirhind and Malwa, which, in all probability, must have succumbed before his rising power had not the British Government taken them under their protection by a well-known treaty which confined Ranjit Singh's boundaries to the right bank of Sutlaj River. Being thus shut out from this 'golden harvest,' Ranjit Singh had to seek for fresh fields in another direction. He moved northwards to take possession of the historic fort at Kangra and, on his way back, reduced the Jalandhar Doab to subjection. Multan, Kashmir and Peshawar each fell in turn and felt the weight of his arms. In 1834 A.D., he pushed his conquest farther than Peshawar and established a military post at Jamrud. It may be noted that he was the first monarch after Anang Pal, who not only rolled back the wave of conquest which continued to flow from the North-West for full eight hundred years, but succeeded in establishing his rule in those regions. By force and strategy he reduced each independent chieftain to the position of a mere fiefholder, amalgamating his possessions with his own kingdom of Lahore. The means by which he gained this large territory might not have been always happy, but all praise must be canceled to the views he entertained of reducing the various provinces and tribes into one consistent Government. On

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*Contd. from page 434.]*

rent families in Bhera whose members held respectable posts under the Government of Maharajah Ranjit Singh, placed their family archives at my disposal, for which they deserve my best thanks.

his death in 1839 A.D., the boundaries of his kingdom extended from the highest chain of the Himalayas in the 35th degree North Latitude to the 28th degree, and from the 70th degree to the 79th degree Longitude. In order to give a more familiar idea of the extent of his kingdom, we may say that it comprised the entire area covered by the British possessions in the modern Panjab, if we exclude from it the districts of Ferozepore, Ludhiana, Hissar, Rohtak, Gurgaon and Karnal from the east and add to it the present boundaries of Kashmir State together with the whole of the North-West Frontier Province on the north and north-west side.

For the purposes of administration Ranjit Singh maintained the chief territorial divisions into which the Great Territorial divisions Akbar had divided this part of his empire, and retained the very designation which the Mughals had given to each of the following three subas :

- (1) Suba Lahore which comprised the Central Panjab;
- (2) Suba-i-Kashmir Jannat-Nazir, or the paradise-resembling province of Kashmir.
- (3) Suba-i-Dar-ul-Aman Multan (the abode of peace).

The Frontier territory was denominated as Alkai Peshawar. In addition to these chief *subas*, which were governed by the officials directly appointed by the Lahore Darbar, there were several hill states which paid *nazrana muqarrari*, a regular and fixed tribute, to the Lahore treasury. Further for revenue purposes, a *suba* was divided into *pargannas*, a *parganna* into *ta'aluqas*, and *ta'aluqa* into *mauzas* or villages. The *mauza* or village constituted the lowest unit in the scale of territorial divisions. The management of a *ta'aluqa* was invariably placed in the hands of an official called a *kardar* or *amil*, while the governor of a *suba* was styled as *Nazim*. Other functionaries connected with the department were *muqaddams*, *chaudharis*, *patwaris* and *qanungos*, whose functions and duties will be detailed later in this paper. This appears to have been the *ta'aluqa* organization of the revenue department.

As with the preceding monarchs of India, whether native or foreign, the chief source of revenue in Ranjit Sources of revenue Singh's time was land. The remaining sources of the income of the Khalsa Exchequer are grouped under four different heads, namely :

- (1) *Sairat*,
- (2) *Nazrana*,

(3) *Wajuhat-i-muqarrari*, and

(4) *Zabti* or forfeiture and escheats.

The term *Sairat* seems to have been used with most convenient latitude of meaning. Any tax which could not be readily referred to any other class, was placed among the *Sair* duties. It includes income from *Mahal-i Abkari* (excise), *Amdani chaukiyat* (custom duties), *Amdani Guzar* (tolls) and *Mandvi Ramras* (salt), and *Mahal Mandiyat*, i.e., duties on almost every marketable commodity.

The second group, i.e., *Nazrana*, includes, firstly, *nazrana mustamri* or perpetual tribute, which was levied mostly on the tributary state and other big *jagirs*; and secondly, *nazrana mutafarriqa* or extraordinary. The *nazrana mutafarriqa* was a sort of present which the sovereign claimed from the recipient of a favour, on the bestowal of a *khila'at* the grant of a *jagir*, on the renewal of a *jagir*, or on its *bahali* or restoration, as well as on succession.

The third group or *wajuhat-i-muqarrari* contained a number of *rusum* or fees: (1) *rusum-i-zabitana* and *sarafana* on *hundwiyat* or bills which roughly corresponded to the stamp duty of modern times, and was charged at the rate of ten annas per thousand; (2) *Rusum-i-muharana*, a sort of fee on each paper that required the royal seal.

The fourth and last head is that of *Zabti*, which covers confiscation of property whether of a fallen foe or of a degraded servant of the state, or by escheats.

In this paper, however, I propose to take up the administration of land revenue alone.

### Land Revenue

The history of the revenue system during the forty years of Ranjit Singh's government reveals an interesting evolution. In the beginning of the reign the simple method of *Batai*, or division of the crops, was mostly prevalent throughout the kingdom, but towards its close we find that the practice of levying cash rates was introduced in certain parts of his territory. The entire length of time occupied by this change may be broadly divided into three periods: although it would not be very easy to draw any hard and fast lines dividing one period from the other.

The first period, beginning with Ranjit Singh's occupation of Lahore in 1799 A.D., ends with 1823 A.D. This was the busiest period of his life. He was always on horse-back leading his armies to

distant fields. He reduced the Sikh misls, occupied the Central Panjab, conquered and annexed Multan and Kashmir, and pushed the boundaries of his kingdom on the west side to the river Indus. Being thus busy with the expansion of his territory, he had hardly any leisure to attend to any improvements in the system which was allowed to continue and we consequently find that during this period the mode of raising the revenues from land consists in a pure and simple division of the crops between the state and the cultivator. The state demand is, as a rule, collected in kind.

The second period, beginning from 1824 A.D., extends over nearly a decade. It was a time of comparative peace, and Ranjit Singh therefore, busied himself in the reorganization of his civil and military establishments. Among several reforms introduced into various branches of his government, the reform in the revenue system is the one that I shall have occasion to describe. The rude device of taking corn from the ryot, besides its attendant evils, e.g., the practice of grain stealing on the part of the cultivator, the inconvenience and cost of carriage of grain to distant markets, could not meet the requirements of the government which had to defray the cost<sup>1</sup> of its civil and military establishments in hard cash. Ranjit Singh, therefore, gave greater encouragement to the system of assessment known as *Kankut* which already prevailed in certain parts of his territory. According to this system, the standing crops were estimated, and the share of the state converted into its money value which the cultivator had to pay in cash. This was in itself a step in the change from grain to money payment, concealed by a fiction—the assessment was nominally in grain but was levied in cash by means of an artificial valuation. The practice gradually replaced the older mode of division of crops, and the revenue of government is henceforth realized in cash.

The third stage in the evolution begins with the ninties of the Bikrami era. By this time the reduction of Feshawar had been complete, and Ranjit Singh had practically rounded his little kingdom and secured for it a scientific frontier. Consequently he had his hands now more free to apply them to the internal improvement of his government. The number of his regularly paid forces was daily increasing and the salary expenditure alone of this army was thirty lacs in 1835 A.D., which rose to

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1. Ranjit Singh's confidential instructions to his Revenue officers were to try to collect the revenue in cash.

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fortysix lacs in 1840, and ultimately reached one crore of rupees in 1844, viz, five years after Ranjit Singh's death. Besides this rise in military expenditure, the expenditure of the civil governments shows a considerable rise during this period, though it in no way keeps pace with the former. To meet this ever-swelling demand on the revenues, Ranjit Singh had, perforce, to devise some methods such as would enable him to estimate his receipts in order to adjust them to this expenditure. In the *Kankut-Batai* systems the Government share was determined only at the close of the harvest time, and it could not, therefore, enable the Government to forecast its budgets. With this end in view Ranjit Singh began to give greater encouragement to the practice of farming out the revenue of large districts for a period extending from three to six years, to contractors who undertook to pay the amount in cash. This practice is noticed even as early as the seventies of the Bikarni era, but the difference in the contracts of the first and those of the third period is very marked. The first point of difference in the contracts of the two periods is that in early years Ranjit Singh farmed out the revenues of only the outlying and troublesome districts in order to be saved from the trouble of local control, while there is no such distinction underlying the contracts of the third period. The second point of difference lies in the term of the leases. The term in the former case was invariably of one year, while the engagements of the latter period were mostly made for a term of three to six years. The lessee paid the stipulated amount to the State and was free on his own part to realize the sum from his tenants by applying *Kankut* or *batai* as was convenient to him, but, in order to prevent extortion and oppression, he was required to furnish to the State a detailed account of the cultivation and produce of the districts leased out to him, and was bound to accord good treatment to the King's subjects.

Still a third point of difference in the contracts of the two periods is in the position of the farmers themselves. In the beginning the contractors were invariably selected from the nobility round the court, but in the later years petty contractors and speculators were allowed to become revenue-farmers. The application of this practice was still further extended, and the direct contracts of revenue, by way of fixing cash assessment for the whole village or of *mauzas* and *talauqas*, were made with their *zamindars*, thus dispensing with the farmer or the middleman and allowing the cultivator to reap the full advantage of



his labour. Such instances, though rare, are there and prove the existence of such a principle, though in an embryonic stage. But individual wells were, as a rule, leased out for a fixed sum as we shall see later on. The advantages of such a system to both the parties are manifest. The State could count upon a fixed income in cash and the farmers felt sure of pocketing the remainder after paying to the state the stipulated amount, and could reap the benefits of short periodical settlements. The extension of the principle underlying this policy of farming was carried still further when the State tried experiments of levying cash *jama'* in some of the *pargannas*, for instance, in Gujrat during the Kardarship of Dewan Kirpa Ram and afterwards of John Holmes, an Anglo-Indian officer in the army of the Maharajah.

To sum up: the practice of short periodical settlements, direct settlements with zamindars, and lastly the practice of imposing cash *jama'* were initiated and set on foot towards the close of Ranjit Singh's reign. The actual division of the crops in the first period gave place to *kankut* in the second, and the practice of farming out the revenues found a general favour in the third, and culminated in fixed cash *jama's*. As already pointed out, the dividing lines of these periods are by no means very sharp, for none of the above three systems was totally absent in any one period. I have denoted the periods as each of the systems—*batai*, *kankut* or farming—was in general favour at the time. From the above survey it appears that there was a gradual drift towards cash assessment, and a letter from Ranjit Singh to the Ludhiana Agency of the E. I. Company asking for a copy of methods of their government points to such a tendency on his part,

*Zabti Jama* — Simultaneously with the above three systems we find that, from the very beginning, certain crops, the produce of which could not stand the delay or division or could not be appraised very accurately, were assessed in cash. This cash *jama'* is in revenue language known as *zabti jama'* and such crops are known as *zabti* crops.

So much then for the history of the revenue system. Let us now consider the methods of work connected with the assessment. Here, too, we notice the same sort of evolution. With the change of the system there comes a change in the method of work.

In earlier years when *batui* was in vogue the process was extremely simple. It neither required any elaborate measuring of the fields, nor the preparation of any detailed revenue records. The crops, when ready

Assessment and  
Records

Batai

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for harvest, were cut and brought to the thrashing-floor where, after the thrashing was over, a division was effected by means of a wooden measure. A fixed proportion of the grain by way of *kharch* for 'amil, *muhasil* and the village menials or *kamins* was taken out from the common heap and the remainder was divided half and half between the State and the cultivator. The State's share was either disposed of then and there, or stored to secure better prices.

In this case a single document called *Jama'bandi* was prepared giving the total out-turn of the crops of the whole village, and showing further the disposal of the shares allotted to the Government and the ryot.

In the later period, however, when the system of appraisement receives general encouragement the settlement operations assume a somewhat elaborate form.

Kankut.

The area under cultivation is regularly measured, and a few registers, by way of revenue records, are prepared and kept in the office of the *qanungo* for future reference. The office of the Kardar henceforth becomes one of importance, and he is given an additional staff or 'amla consisting of a clerk or *mutasaddi*, a *sandukchi* or treasurer, and a few surveyors and appraisers, *Kachchus* and *Kanois*. The process was still very simple and did not take more than a couple of months for its entire completion. The measurement commenced at the harvest time when the Kardar visited each field under crop and got it measured by surveyors. The unit of measure applied was the local *Karam*. The measurement was effected by a man's paces, but it appears that sometimes other methods were resorted to as well. Nisar Ali, on page 438 of his *History of Parganah Mamdot*, mentions that an interesting mode of measuring fields by the paces of a horse was prevalent during the Sikh rule. He does not, however, say anything further as to how the area was calculated or converted into *kanals* and bighas.

Having measured the fields, its dimensions (*tul* and *arz*) and the total area (*arazi*) with the description of the crop were noted in separate columns against the name of the *assami* or tenant in the *Khasra girdawari*.

Simultaneously with the measurement, the Kardar, with the help of the professional appraiser, estimated the produce of each field and noted its out-turn in the same register after the column for the area figure. This practically completed the assessment. The only other

points worthy of notice in this connection are the few contrivances devised by the State to check the accuracy of the results so obtained, and the mode of preparing revenue records. These appraisers, it may be noted, were in the first place drawn from a professional class, and could, therefore, judge the out-turn with great accuracy. Authorities so far removed from each other in space of time as Abul Fazal, author of the *Ain-i-Akbari* and A. Brandreth, Settlement Officer, Rawalpindi Division, 1856 AD., concur in testifying to the above statement. The Government, in order to be more sure of the correctness of these calculations, further laid down a rule that the Kardar must compare his results with those obtained by his predecessor, and in case of any considerable discrepancy between the two, he was to report the matter and wait for the subsequent orders from the Darbar before he announced the final *Jama'*. In another place we meet with still further provision to safeguard the interests of the ryot. In some of the despatches issued to the Kardars, they are instructed to consult the leading and respectable men of the village on *Bandobast Mu'amlā*. The wording runs thus :—

In short, the policy to be pursued by a Kardar in assessing the land may be fairly estimated by the standing orders of the Maharaja that which purports that he should so assess the land as to enable the Government, on one hand, to receive its due proportion of the produce, and, on the other, not to deprive the cultivator of his profit, nor endanger the prosperity of the *Ta'aluqa*.

The next point that claims our attention is in regard to the records. The first and the preliminary register was prepared as the measurements proceeded and is known as *Khasra-zabt-Kankut*—there being no *Shajra* or field map.

(1) The *Khasra* has five separate columns giving :

- i) the name of the *assami* or tenant and the description of the crop.
- ii) and (iii) *tul* and *'arz*, i.e., the dimensions of the field.
- iv) *'arazi* or the total area, and
- v) *ghalla* or the estimated out-turn of the crop.

The fields in the *Khasra* are arranged according to tenancies and not by crops, and the arrangement is, therefore, *assamiwar* and not *kishtwar*.

2) The second register—its designation I have not been able to decipher—was excerpted from the *Khasra* arranging the field by crops. Here columns (ii) and (iii) disappear, but the rest of the arrangement

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is the same.

3) Third in the order was *Jama'bandi*. Here the column form totally disappears and it gives in a narrative form :—

- i) The total out-turn of the crops for the whole village;
- ii) Under each crop is shown the allotment of the shares of State and the cultivator; and
- iii) The value of the State's share. On this point again we meet with a standing order of the Maharaja, to the effect that in commuting the State's share into its money-value, the Kardar should apply only such rates as were allowed by the Durbar, and in case of any alteration therein he must obtain the royal sanction. These rates, I may here add, were determined by the Durbar from the price-lists prepared by the *qanungos* or else submitted by the principal grain-dealers of the district. The prices were not however uniform for the entire province, but varied with each district.

The above registers were meant only for the record of the District Office. The final register to be submitted to the Head Office (Durbar) was only a concise abstract prepared from the above. It is divided into three distinct parts. The first deals with the receipts under different heads showing :—

1) *Baqaya sal Guzashia* or arrears collected for the preceding year, with the name and description of *assamis* and the amount received from each.

2) The Amount realizable for current year headed *hal* (or current), with comparative demand statement showing assessment fixed for each *mauza* for the first year of the new assessment, with details of progressive demands claimable in future years in case the assessment was made for a term of years more than one.

3) *Jagirat kharij az jama'*, e.g., assignments with the name of the assignees and description and value of the Jagir land exempted from revenue.

4) *Kharch ta'aluqa*, i.e., cost of collection and administration.

5) Net revenue.

The second part covers disbursements and is headed *mutasalik*, which means *kharch*. Each item with the date of its disbursement and a brief remark about its nature is clearly put down.

The third part shows the balance outstanding or *baqi*, with the description of the *assamis* and the arrears due from each.

Simultaneously with the assessment in kind, the Government Cash assessment used to impose cash Jama in one or other of the following ways :

1) The *zabti jama'* — This *jama'* as referred to in the history of revenue was a cash assessment upon selected crops. The method followed in this case was little different from the one followed in the *kankut*. The Government share was not determined with reference to the total output of the field, but the entire area under cultivation was assessed at cash rates per *kanal* or *bigha*. Consequently in the *zabti* part of the *Khasra* papers there are additional columns, one showing the area *Nabud* or spoiled, and the other, area *Pukhta* or matured. In *jama'bandi* again, it is only the matured area that appears, the area spoiled not being charged.

2) *Chahat-i-igrari*. Still another method which is found to have prevailed only in certain areas was that of assessing wells at a lump sum. Such wells were known as *chahat igrari* or *qarari-chahat*. The *jama'bandi* papers give us only the names of such wells and the *jama'* imposed upon them, but the area irrigated by them is very seldom given. However, there is no doubt that the area attached to these wells was specified, and the *jama* was imposed with reference to the area attached to the well. In *ta'aluqa* Ranghar Nangal, Rs. 2-8 per *ghumaon* was uniformly levied on each well in *mayza* Kuthala, where 32 wells with 568 *ghumaons* of land between them paid a *jama'* or Rs. 1,430. *Barani* land in the same village paid at a rate Re. 1 per *ghumaon*. The amount was to be paid in two instalments of *Rabi* and *Kharif*, though not exactly half and half. In Multan and Jhang divisions, where there was much waste land to be reclaimed, there was another class of wells known as *chahat istamrari* upon which a *jama'* of Rs. 10 to Rs. 15 was imposed in perpetuity. In its efforts to encourage the cultivation the State carried this practice further by sinking the wells at its own cost and charging their dues as *chakdars* in addition to the revenue ordinarily leviable. These wells are known as *chahat shahana* or royal wells.

*Farming* — Under this system there is nothing very particular that deserves any notice. The farmer entered into a contract with the State agreeing to pay the amount stated in the contract-deed. However, it would not be without interest to give a specimen of the *pata-nama*.

The farmer was required to submit to the Government a detailed

return-statement of the produce, collection, etc. Ordinarily he was to receive from the ryots that which was fixed or customary, or in other words he had to adhere to the *hasto-o-bud* practice, and was prevented from demanding any illegal charges. Strict orders were given to prevent the farmer from robbing the cultivators, and the lessee was further bound to treat His Highness's subjects well, and to add to the resources of the country.

The ruling power in India has always, by the ancient law of the land, been entitled to a share in the produce of the soil. The theory as expounded by the Hindu Sovereign seems to have been that the king who governs for the good of his subjects should take a share of their income only to give it back in a more useful shape, as the sun takes away water from the earth and gives it back in the shape of rain a hundredfold greater in volume (Manu). Manu, the greatest of the Hindu law-givers, prescribes the State's share of the income from land at 1/6th of its gross produce. As regards the early Muhammadan Emperors, with exception of Ferozeshah and a few others, sufficient information is not forthcoming as might enable us to form any correct idea of their revenue system. It was only under Akbar that Muslim government acquired form and consistency in India, and we learn from Abul Fazil that the Government share of the produce of land was fixed at 1/3. Aurangzeb, the last in the first group of the Great Mughals, raised it to 1/2, probably to meet the heavy drain on his resources caused by his long campaign of twenty-five years in the south. No records, giving any detailed information as to the working of the system in the imperial days, have come down to our hands; it is consequently very difficult to form any definite opinion as to the change *in toto* levied by the State in actual practice. But of the Government of Maharajah Ranjit Singh, besides the abstract statements of revenue-returns submitted by various Kardars to the Head Office at Lahore, which are fortunately still preserved in the Civil Secretariat, I succeeded in obtaining from other places several papers throwing a good deal of light on the practical working of the system in the Maharajah's days. The perusal of this record shows that the State's share of the gross produce was not rigidly fixed at any one uniform rate, but rather varied with the quality of the soil and other facilities of cultivation. From the lands of peculiar fertility with great facility for natural irrigation, and

where, therefore, the capital and labour necessary to work the soil were very moderate, 50 per cent of the gross produce was taken, and in the case of less fertile tracts the State demand varied from  $\frac{2}{5}$ ths to  $\frac{1}{3}$ rd but it never fell lower than this in central Panjab, or Subah Lahore as it was then denominated. The *jama'bandi* papers further show that a surcharge of one seer per maund on the Government share was levied in addition to its ordinary demand of 50 per cent, which raises the total demand to 51.25 per cent of the gross produce, but the land newly brought under cultivation and requiring extraordinary labour paid at reduced rates for the first few years—the rate varying from  $\frac{1}{4}$ th to  $\frac{1}{3}$ rd of the total yield.

In Multan, on the other hand, land was assessed at a much lower rate. Fifty per cent of the gross produce, which is a general rate in the central Punjab, is rather occasional and uncommon in Multan, where the Government share varies mostly from  $\frac{1}{3}$ rd to  $\frac{1}{6}$ th of the gross produce, in this province. I may here mention, a peculiar sort of tenure known as the *chakdari* tenure was prevailing at this time. It probably originated with the desire on the part of the ruling power to reclaim the waste land that was lying in abundance in the country. Where the owner did not cultivate the land, the Governor Madan Hazari and his successor Sawan Mal granted patents to individuals other than the owner to sink wells and earn the profit for themselves paying only a nominal rent to the proprietor through the State. The tenant, or the occupant as we may call him, paid the revenue to the State which the latter divided with the proprietor in the ratio of 2 to 1.

With regard to the territory in *Alkai* Peshawar our records do not furnish any details, but in the Punjab Administration Report for 1847-49 A. D. on page 82, we read : "except from the peculiarly rich lands the Government demand never exceeded  $\frac{1}{3}$ rd, and usually averaged  $\frac{1}{4}$ th or  $\frac{1}{5}$ th, and fell even lower down to  $\frac{1}{8}$ th of the crop."

Beside the ordinary share of the produce the Government charged a number of cesses. As will appear from the table below, there was no uniform rate at which the amount was imposed on different districts.

Percentage of extra cesses      I have, therefore, thought it better to give a few instance which might enable us to form a rough idea of percentage on the revenue proper.

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In Šambat 1876 [1877] (1821 A.D.) the maximum recorded under this head in the returns for a ta'aluqa Wazirabad amounts to Rs. 4,790 where the revenue proper is recorded at Rs. 40,060, which gives a percentage of nearly Rs. 12.

In *ta'aluqa* Surban (Gurdaspur) the cesses imposed give us a total of Rs. 4,930 where the revenue proper is recorded at Rs. 59,070, which means a percentage of 8.3, and the minimum amount recorded in the year gives a percentage of 5.15 on the Government demand. These cesses are very complicated and confusing in their details, and are so irregular in their incidence that it is difficult for me at the present stage of my work to advance any theory in regard to them, more especially when it is not clearly demonstrated anywhere in the records for what particular object they were levied. What I have been able to make out is that the amount so imposed was collected with the revenue proper, and is very seldom shown on the debit side of the *Kharch Pargana*, i.e., the cost of collection and local administration. It probably found its way to the royal coffers, or was shared by the court favourites in the shape of *rusum* or perquisites.

Ranjit Singh's Government did not appear to have recognized the modern principle that local taxation should be raised only to meet the local needs. The theory governing these cesses cannot, therefore, very fairly be compared to the one governing the cesses of the present day. If we eliminate the *Panjotra* cess which is common to both systems, the remaining charges at the present day are usually spent by the District Boards on improvements of roads, spread of primary education, and the establishment of charitable dispensaries—objects undoubtedly of far greater public utility and promotive of the general level of enlightenment.

It will not be without interest to note one other point in connection with Ranjit Singh's demands from the farmers of the revenue. The contractor was required to supply, as a part of stipulated revenue, the special products both vegetable and animal of the district under his charge: the *bara* rice from Peshawar and wheat from Chach (near Attock) found their way to the *langar khas* (kitchen royal), the curiosities of Kashmir and cotton and silk manufacturers of Multan were stored in the *Tosha khana*. Dhani, Rohtas, Jhelum and Katchi supplied the horses for his cavalry. Rawalpindi Kalar Kahar, Hazara, Kalabagh, and Multan each supplied its quota of camels for the transport and commissariat supplies to the army, while hounds



and hawks for royal sport formed a part of the tribute from the hill states of Mandi, Kulu and Nurpur.

Although Ranjit Singh's demands, as will appear from the above, were rather heavy, we cannot at the same time ignore the fact that he bestowed his greatest attention in watching the interest of the poor ryot. No *Dastur-ul-'amal* or *Ain* issued to a Kardar could be regarded as complete without the one important instruction, i.e., "prosperity of the subject should be your paramount care." The husbandman was encouraged in every possible way to become a good cultivator. The Kardar was instructed to supply the needy cultivator with :—

- (i) The *taqavi* advances for the purchase of good seed;
- (ii) The material for the repair of his well, if it was out of working order.

In addition to the above facilities given to a cultivator, we meet with a standing order of the Maharajah forbidding the creditor to attach the bullocks, fodder and other implements of the cultivator in execution of his decree.

Further, in the province of Multan, where the country was little better than a desert and the cultivation more or less depended upon artificial irrigation, the State undertook the task of sinking wells, and the celebrated Sawan Mall started other irrigation works by way of repairing the old canals and digging of several new ones. Compared with the network of canals and other similar large undertakings, and the manifold encouragements given to the cultivator at the present day, the achievements of Ranjit Singh may not seem very great, but considering the time and resources of the Governments of those days, it is certainly satisfactory to note that the Government of Ranjit Singh was not unconscious of its duties towards its subjects.

### Collection

The collection of revenue formed the principal part of the duties of a Kardar, but the work of actual realization from the *assamis* was done by the agency of Muqaddams and Chaudharis, who were selected from amongst men of local influence. They correspond to the present Lambardars and Zaildars, and like the latter had a right to commission on the revenue payable through them—the rate being generally 5 per cent of the

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total collection. The amount collected was paid into the district treasury, and the Kardar, in turn, remitted it to the *khazana-i-amra* or the treasurer-in-chief at Lahore, or else handed it over to one of the Receivers-general of revenue.

The payment of Government revenue when it was realized in cash could not be made in one sum by the cultivator, and the power of the people to pay without difficulty largely depended on the suitability of the time of demand. The dates of the payment were, accordingly, so fixed that the cultivator could find time to sell his produce, or could conveniently borrow from the village *sahukar* (banker) and was consequently in a position to pay his liabilities to the Government. The first instalment of *Rabi'* revenue was made good in Jeth-Har, viz, a month after the reaping was over, and that for *Kharif* was effected during Katik and Magh. The Kardar was instructed as to manage the realization of the Government demand as not to impoverish the payee.

In recovering its dues from the defaulting *assamis*, the Government had not to go a long way off. Ordinarily it was the agent, whether a Zamindar or a Kardar, who was held responsible for the payment himself. The procedure was simple, and, on the whole, appears to have been mild.

In the first instance it was effected by the issue of a *Parwana* or writ of demand served by a Government peon or *sipahi*—fifteen days being generally allowed as a period of grace during which time they were to realize the amount and pay it into the treasury. If the first summons was not obeyed a *Dastak shadid* (Warrant of arrest) was issued and the defaulter sometimes fined, but usually only threatened with a fine. The absconding defaulters, when they migrated to another *Ta'aluqa*, were summoned back to their holdings through the Kardar of the district to which they migrated. As a rule the absconding *assamis* were induced to come back, coercion being only applied as a last resort. But how such defaulters as totally refused to pay the revenue were treated, I have not come across any *Ain* on the point, nor any recorded instance of the attachment of his crop or other real property, in the record. A careful reading of the despatch books unmistakably leads one to believe that the Government demand was not in many instances collected *vi et armis* as has often been alleged,

and that even the application of coercive processes was confined to very few cases. Mere threats or notices to the careless rather than serious action against defaulters was always the case.

Under a system like that of Ranjit Singh, where the assessment was made at the close of harvest time, there was hardly any necessity for a regular provision on Suspension and remission of revenue this point. From the despatches issued to the Kardars at different times, it however appears that the Government recognised such a necessity and dealt with the individual cases as they arose. On folio 17 a, of Volume III, we meet with recorded instances where the Kardar is instructed to go round the fields in order to inspect the crops personally and estimate the damage on the spot.

Further, whenever the cultivators were found really unable to pay their dues, the Kardar was directed to postpone the collection to next harvest, thus preventing desertion on the part of the cultivator (*Vide* folio 112 ad, vol. V).

The Government of Ranjit Singh, though it did not make any rules to regulate the collection, suspension and remission of revenue, such as the present revenue law provides, yet in actual practice does not seem to have overlooked such a necessity. As it will appear from what has been said above, the Maharaja at times reduced his demand and adjusted its collection, to suit the convenience of the ryot.

The district organization of the revenue department had two sets of officials each with its own sphere of work.

The term *Kardar* or '*amil*' was used to denote the collector of revenues of a *ta'aluqa* under the Sikh Government. His principal duties were to supervise and carry out the settlement work, assess and announce the revenue *jama* and subsequently to realize the revenue thus imposed. But this was not all he had to do. In absence of any established law courts over the country the '*amil*' was called upon to act as a judge and a magistrate in the district of which he was appointed the revenue collector. The different capacities in which he was called upon to act may be enumerated as :

- i) Supervisor of the settlement work.
- ii) Collector of Government revenue.
- iii) Treasurer and accountant, inasmuch as he had to keep the

LAND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION UNDER MAHARAJAH RANJIT SINGH

amount collected in his *tahwil*, and was required to submit a detailed account of the money disposed of.

- iv) A judge and a magistrate, to decide the civil and criminal cases in consultation with the arbitrators.
- v) Administrator of the excise and customs of the *ta'aluqa*, though not often.
- vi) He was to remain in touch with the different men around him and keep himself informed of anything of note that happened in his district. Lastly, he was in duty bound to watch the interests of the Government and to look to the welfare of the people whom he was appointed to govern. It would be better to quote in original the instructions given to him on his appointment to office.

As I have used modern terminology in illustrating the nature of his duties, I think it necessary to add here that his authority, functions, dignity and salary should not be taken to correspond to those of the modern functionary of that rank. There were no set rules governing the salaries of these officials. But, on the whole, it appears that his pay was in proportion to the annual value of the *ta'aluqa* in his charge. The ratio as worked out by me ranges from -/1/- to -/1/9 per diem for every thousand of the *jama* imposed. This statement will be found to be applicable only in the case of petty Kardars with an allowance of one to five rupees per day. The *nazims* or governors of provinces were decently paid—the Governor of Kashmir, Diwan Kirpa Ram, used to get Rs. 100,000 *talbuzat*, of Peshawar, General Avitabile, Rs. 41,000, and Lala Sukh Dayal of Multan, Rs. 36,000 per annum. The Kardar was generally paid for only ten months in a year. How this practice originated is not traceable anywhere in the record, but it appears very probable that this deduction of two months' pay in the year was made on account of the *nazzar* for Dussehra and Diwali. It was customary with Ranjit Singh to hold a public Durbar on such occasions and receive *nazzars* (presents) from his big Sardars in person and bestow *khila'ats* and *in'ams* in return. With regard to the subordinate officials, this *nazzar* was deducted from their annual salary, and from his subjects in general it was collected with the Land Revenue under the head of...The Kardar was allowed a small establishment consisting of one *sandukchi* or treasurer on 15 to 20 rupees a month and a writer or *Mutasadi* on 20 to 25 rupees a month.

Quite Separate from, and in a sense independent of, the Kardar's staff, was the office of the Qanungo or the Registrar of collections. This branch of the revenue department was mainly composed of the Qanungo himself, the Patwaris, and the surveyors and appraisers. The exact nature of his duties is not described in any one place, but whatever I have been able to gather from the scattered *ains* and despatches issued at different times, I give below. His office, it appears, was intened as a check on the financial transactions of all the other revenue officers. He was required to maintain in his office papers of different nature, viz,

- i) for the compilation of statistics for the area of land under cultivation, in the district;
- ii) the nature of the produce and the results of each harvest;
- iii) a detailed account of the disposal of the produce according to the shares allotted by the rules to the Government and the ryot;
- iv) he had to keep in addition to the above a sort of register showing the boundaries of each village, as one finds that references are constantly made to his office for the determination of contested boundaries, the use of rivers, and other sources of irrigation. This roughly corresponds to the records in the modern agriculture and land-records department. He was paid either by an allotted share of the produce or in cash (Rs. 30 per month). This, in main, formed the district organization of the revenue department under Ranjit Singh and it appears to have been a simple machine suitable to the times. In running this machinery Ranjit Singh had not to spend any considerable part of his revenue. As will appear from the annexed table, the cost of provincial government, including the cost for the realization of revenues, did not go higher than 6.30 per cent of the total land revenue from the subah Panjab. Whether the Government, run at so cheap a cost, could ensure efficiency, I am not prepared at this stage to consider, but that it continued to work for thirty years is an argument in its favour.

LAND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION UNDER MAHARAJAH RANJIT SINGH

Statements showing the Annual Receipts and Disbursements of the Khalsa Exchequer for the Sambat 1877 (1821 A.D.)

Name of the Subah or Province	RECEIPTS				Jagirs or alienations in the ta'aluqa	EXPENDITURE					
	Mal or land Revenue Gross	Salt, Mohrana and duties, tolls, etc.	Nazrana Tributes from Hill States and other miscellaneous presents	Total receipts		Cost of Provincial administration including cost of revenue collection of	Ahlikaran Hazur (Secretariat Staff)	Miscellaneous establishment	Subordinate Staff of various Departments	Imperial Army (Army of the Sipah rakab stirrup)	Garrisons : Atwal-Qilla Jat
1. Panjab	27,39,579	14,12,846	12,63,500	54,15,925	80,751	1,72,181	26,500	32,168	31,939	28,25,138	3,27,539
	(Nanak Shahi)										
2. Kashmir	40,67,861	13,11,139	...	53,79,000	...	1,79,000	...	...	...	...	20,42,448
	(Kashmir coins)	(Kashmir coins)		(Kashmir coins)		(Kashmir coins)					(Kashmir coins)
3. Multan	5,80,975	75,000	...	6,55,975	...	75,330	...	...	...	...	1,42,556
	(Nanak Shahi)										
4. Peshawar	Not yet annexed										
	33,20,554	14,87,864	12,63,500	60,71,900		2,47,411	26,500	32,168	31,939	28,25,138	4,70,135
	(Nanak Shahi)			(Nanak Shahi)							
	40,67,861	13,11,139	...	53,79,000	...	1,79,700	...	...	...	...	20,42,448
	(Kashmir coins)	(Kashmir coins)		(Kashmir coins)		(Kashmir coins)					(Kashmir coins)

## History Society, Patiala

With a view to exploring the possibility of starting a history society at Patiala Dr Fauja Singh convened a meeting of the scholars and teachers of history of Patiala at the residence of Dr Ganda Singh on 6th April, 1968. The idea of starting such a society was welcomed by one and all. It was unanimously resolved that the society should be called 'History Society, Patiala' and Dr Fauja Singh be appointed as its permanent Secretary. The aims and objects of the society were laid down as under:

1. Search for fresh historical evidence in every form, viz., archaeological, archival, oral, etc., and evaluation of the existing works of history especially those of the Punjab history.
2. Organising of seminars, lectures and discussions on the basis of original research and to publish the results thereof.

It was also decided that there should be regular monthly meetings of the society on a fixed day. In accordance with this decision the monthly meetings of the society have since been held regularly either at the Punjab State Archives or at the Central Public Library. In each meeting a research paper was presented by some scholar, followed by a fruitful discussion. Uptil now thirty-seven papers have been read and discussed in the meetings of the society. The titles of these papers are given below against the names of their authors :

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. Dr. Fauja Singh              | Some Controversial aspects regarding the Evolution of Khalsa. |
| 2. Dr Ganda Singh               | Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev.                                  |
| 3. Sh. Y. P. Bajaj              | Problems of the genesis of the Bhakra Dam                     |
| 4. Dr Aparna Chatto-<br>padhyay | The handsome and healthy Punjabis of the Greek Accounts.      |
| 5. Sh. C. L. Datta              | Political Mission of J. D. Cunningham to Kinnaur (1841-42).   |
| 6. Dr L. M. Joshi               | Siddhas in legend and history.                                |
| 7. S. Bhagat Singh              | Institution of Gurmata.                                       |
| 8. Dr S. K. Bajaj               | Indianisation of Civil Services up to 1879.                   |

# HISTORY SOCIETY PATIALA

9. S. Gurbux Singh Jai Singh's visit to Kashmir.
10. Dr Kirpal Singh A study of Manuscript Janamsakhi in the old India office Library.
11. S. Tarlochan Singh Sethi Probable routes followed by Guru Nanak.
12. Sh. A. C. Arora Phulkian Chiefs, Paper of Requests (1858) in the context of their previous Relations with the British Government.
13. Dr Fauja Singh Early phase of Freedom Movement in the Punjab, 1849-1900.
14. Dr C. L. Datta Freedom Movement in the Punjab, 1900-1919.
15. S. Randhir Singh Zaffar-Nama and its historical significance.
16. Dr S. K. Bajaj Freedom Struggle in the Punjab 1920-1947.
17. Dr C. L. Datta Significance of Shawl-wool trade in Western Himalayan Politics.
18. Dr Fauja Singh Dr J. S. Bains' paper entitled 'Political ideas of Guru Gobind Singh.'
19. Dr Kirpal Singh Guru Nanak's Travels in the Himalayas.
20. Dr Fauja Singh Growth of Khalsa Commonwealth—its institutional aspects.
21. Dr Fauja Singh Foundation of Khalsa Commonwealth—its ideological aspects.
22. Dr Kirpal Singh Legends of Guru Nanak and Kabir.
23. Dr C. L. Datta British Reactions Towards Dogri Invasions of Ladakh, Baltistan and Western Tibet (1834-42).
24. Dr S. K. Bajaj Sir James Fitz Stephen's Concept of British Imperialism in India.
25. Shri Kamesh Walia Praja Mandal Movement in East Punjab States.
26. Sh. M. S. Ahluwalia Padmini Affair—A Myth or Historical event.
27. Sh. A. C. Arora Kapurthala Will Case—Its Reflections on the British Policy.
28. Sh. Raj Kumar Maharaja Dalip Singh in Russia
29. S. Gursharan Singh Maharaja Bhupinder Singh and the Akali Movement.



- |                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 30. Sh. Y. P. Bajaj              | Sir Chhotu Ram—Why he left Indian National Congress.  |
| 31. Dr Parkash Singh             | Prospects of a Socialistic Revolution in the Punjab.  |
| 32. Dr Kirpal Singh              | Genesis of the idea of Partition of the Punjab.   |
| 33. S. Bhagat Singh              | Sovereignty and State Policy of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.  |
| 34. S. Manjit Singh<br>Ahluwalia | Early Phase of Muslim Expansion in Rajasthan—A study based on Epigraphic Evidence.                  |
| 35. Dr S. K. Bajaj               | British Policy towards the Punjab Peasantry with special reference to the Punjab Tenancy Act, 1868. |
| 36. Sh. Romesh Walia             | Early History of the Malwa Region.  |
| 37. Dr S. S. Bal                 | J. D. Cunningham and <i>History of the Sikhs</i> .  |

Fauja Singh

## Review

*THE GREAT DIVIDE: BRITAIN-INDIA-PAKISTAN*, by H. V. HODSON

published by Hutchinson & Co., London, 1969, pp. 563, price 84 sh.

Here is a book written by an author who had been Constitutional Adviser to the Viceroy in 1941-42 and had access to the rarest documents like the Report on the last Viceroyalty, Governor General's reports to the Sovereign, series of confidential reports of successive Viceroys of India, Sir Stafford Cripps' letters to his wife, Lord Ismay's India Papers and letters to his wife, placed at his disposal by the widow, which could be available only to a privileged parson like Hodson. The author lays no claim to impartiality when he says, '... every historian ... must have a personal point of view, without which history is anaemic, and my viewpoint cannot but be British', and yet his is the book more impartial and unbiased of the many published on the subject so far.

Besides a few pages which make a little heavy reading, the style is quite racy and captivating. His descriptions are apt and meaningful when he says, 'the prestige and authority that Britain gained in the world affairs from being master of an immense empire of which India was the heart was a great pride in itself' and pungently adds, 'pride is less easily sacrificed than even major material interests.'

The conduct of provisional Self-Governments from 1937-39, he terms as a major cause of the spread of the two-nation theory and the Pakistan movement. In February 1940, Mr. Jinnah's public proclamation that any constitutional settlement must recognise that India was not one nation but two, followed in March at Lahore by the League's famous Pakistan resolution, put a seal to it. Pandit Nehru's ill-timed visit to the Frontier, more than anything else, made partition inevitable. The dialogue between Mr. Pendrel Moon (Secretary to the Governor of the Punjab) and Sir Sikander Hayat Khan (Prime Minister of the Punjab), is revealing and prophetic, since nine years later, Pakistan did mean a massacre though Sir Sikander was dead.

The author is all for young Lord Mountbatten, who at the age of 46 came to India on 22nd March 1947, to preside over its destiny,

divide it into two Dominions, became first Governor General of one of these, much against his wishes and went back on 21st of June 1948, to take up his coveted naval career, which he had made a precondition before accepting the last viceroyalty of India. How much this man of exceeding personal charm achieved in a short period of time is fantastic by any standards. He was free to choose his own staff, with no departmental scrutiny of any honours he recommended and with full powers to carry out the policy with which he was entrusted. In fact, he practically 'wrote his own ticket'. In this connection, the following conversation between Lord Mountbatten and Pandit Nehru a few days after his arrival in India, besides being pithy, is quite revealing :

Nehru asked : 'Have you by some miracle got plenipotentiary powers ?'

Lord Mountbatten : 'Why do you ask ?'

'You behave quite differently from any former Viceroy.

You speak with an air of authority as though you were certain that what you said would never be reversed by H.M.G. in London.'

'Suppose I have plenipotentiary powers, what difference would it make ?'

'Why then you will succeed, where all others have failed.'

In spite of Lord Wavell's parting words to Lord Mountbatten, "I am sorry for you, you have been given an impossible job", Nehru's prophetic words came true.

Cripp's Mission has been rightly described as an exercise in appeasement and the Cabinet Mission in futurity.

Where in March 1946 shrewd Mountbatten could dissuade emotional Nehru from laying wreaths on the I.N.A. memorial in Singapore, he could equally well in June 1948, persuade the realist Patel to give a long rope to Hyderabad State, as a parting gesture at Mussoorie. When Pandit Nehru insisted on stoppage of INA trials for political reasons, Mountbatten won his point as is aptly evident from this exchange :

Mountbatten : 'The Commander-in-Chief will resign.'

Nehru : 'That doesn't worry me.'

'And I will resign too.'

'But why ?'

'Because I was the Supreme Commander under whom the loyal Indians fought : I led them against the INA.'

BOOK REVIEW

'That would be terrible. We cannot start again with a new Viceroy.'

'Well, you must choose.'

'You are pressing me very hard ... You must give me time.'

And that was, in effect, the end of the INA as a political issue.

One wonders, how a man like Lord Mountbatten could not understand Mr. Jinnah to the extent he should have, otherwise Jinnah proposing himself as the Governor General of Pakistan should not have come as a bombshell to Mountbatten, which he described so in his report to the Secretary of State and had put his scheme off the Keel. Again the Governor of the Punjab Sir Evan Jenkins and Lord Mountbatten failing to comprehend the likely massacre and destruction in the Punjab after partition, does credit to none

Army was the special preserve and the British Government was rightly proud of its loyalty which was intact. How a Sikh Major, fought against his own clan and received many a wounds in the bargain, but saved the Muslim refugees in the train under his command. So was the Navy, but any trouble in the Army was bound to spread there. The Indian Air Force Officers were said to be very political minded. Infection of the Armed Forces with the prevailing acute communalism could not be ruled out.

Lord Mountbatten's sincerity and uprightness are beyond reproach, yet like any other human being he erred in lingering over the accession of Hyderabad which was at his personal intervention, and again persuading unwilling Nehru to take the Kashmir problem to UNO.

Character of political leaders like, Mr. Jinnah, Nehru, Gandhi, Patel, Maulana Azad and others is brought out in bold relief, when Lord Mountbatten about Jinnah says, '... the only adviser to whom Mr. Jinnah listened was Mr. Jinnah.' V. P. Menon who with Sardar Patel did maximum for the country by reorganising the States, instead of being given recognition was allowed to pass on into oblivion after Sardar Patel's death.

Pandit Nehru in his first list for post independence Cabinet omitted the name of Sardar Patel and Lord Mountbatten had to convey his alarm to Pandit Nehru, '...this will start a war of succession in the Congress Party and split in the country,' to get Patel's name included.

There is no denying that the problem of India was essentially one of imperialism, nationalism and internal disunity, not of race or colour. India was passing through two great revolutions at once: (i), the revolu-

tion of national liberation undoing 150 years of British rule, and (ii), the revolution of Hindu Muslim separation, undoing a millennium of Islamic conquest and Hindu reaction. Violence against the British Raj was no longer either needed or used. There was very little anti-British feeling, but inter-communal hatred had become a devouring flame.

The author has brought out Mr. Winston Churchill's character and depth of his feeling to lime light, when after Nehru had called on Churchill, with tears in his eyes, tells Mr. R.A. Butler, 'we put that man in gaol for ten years and he bears us no malice. I could not have been so magnanimous.' Here the author seems to be at pains as in other similar instances to justify the British or his own personal point of view, when he goes on to say that Mr. Churchill was the soul of magnanimity.

Lord Mountbatten paid a remarkable tribute to Mahatma Gandhi, when in a broadcast on AIR, he referred to Gandhi ji, as, '...the one-man boundary force who kept the peace while a 50,000 strong force was swamped by riots.'

The amount of hard work, effort and labour, the author had to put in to write such an illuminating book (begun in 1962 and completed in 1968), cannot be described any better than in his own words, when he says, '...A six-year pregnancy is longer than any spouse should have to suffer'.

It is hard to believe that a well versed, authentic, enlightened writer of Mr. Hodson's calibre could write in the author's introduction, 'Menon, an old colleague and friend, had often urged me to write the history of the end of the British period in India, but I had to say I was much too busy with other things. Then in 1962, Lord Ismay *begged* (italics are reviewer's) me, in Lord Mountbatten's name as well as his own and Menon's, to take on the task...' This smacks of conceit. May be in one of his weaker moments he penned these words, which he never cared to re-read.

The author needs to be congratulated for such an incisive exposition of the 'The Great Divide'.

The Printers and Publishers deserve to be congratulated that in a book of 563 pages, except one additional word 'for' in line 4 on page 337, no other mistake has been detected.

Mohan Singh

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